Experiences of Businesses Obtaining WaterSense Label for Irrigation Controllers

Brent Mecham

Irrigation Association

- Irrigation Association is a trade association
- Over 1600 member companies representing agriculture and landscape
  - Manufacturers, dealers/distributors, consultants, contractors, governmental agencies and technical experts

Background

- Smart Water Application Technologies (SWAT) is a collaborative effort between municipal water providers and the irrigation industry.
- Irrigation Association manages the initiative
- Started in 2002
  - Seeking solutions to reduce outdoor water use
  - Manufacturers already making new products looking for market transformation
  - Drought in the west was a big impetus

SWAT Mission

- SWAT mission is about market transformation.
- SWAT created a testing protocol to validate manufacturer claims for smart controllers.
- Followed the ISO standard setting process
  - Experts write a proposed protocol
  - Seek public input
  - Make appropriate modifications
- Started testing in 2006
- Test a technology—19 manufacturers

EPA WaterSense

- Along came EPA WaterSense
- Working with EPA, the SWAT testing protocol is used as the bases for the WaterSense labeling program with a few modifications
- EPA WaterSense labels individual products
  - 11 manufacturers
  - 154 products

Labeling Process

- Right weather conditions
- Manufacturer chooses certifying entity with a working relationship with a testing lab.
- Initial testing cost ($10-20,000)
  - Varies by testing lab
- Annual re-inspection ($3-5,000)
- Product cost

Market transformation

- SWAT posting of results is used as the basis for rebates.
- Beginning to see WaterSense labeling as an alternate source for rebating products.
- EPA WaterSense has more clout and resources than SWAT
- Market transformation has been much slower than anyone expected

Future

- Soil Moisture Sensors
- Sprinklers and nozzles
- Flow sensors
- Valves
- Write protocols and then go through the standard setting process.