

## **Central control compared with MAIT iNELLiWEB**

We are often asked the difference between a central control irrigation system and the iNELLiWEB system. Clients are deciding whether to install a central control system or the iNELLiWEB, or they have a central control system and do not think iNELLiWEB is required or is of no value.

iNELLiWEB is not a “central control” system. iNELLiWEB is a monitoring and irrigation automation system that records data from sensors installed in the field at each irrigation management location. The data collected at each site is transmitted to a server or web site, where the real time information can be viewed directly through the graphing software. The sensors that are most commonly used for turf applications are soil moisture, pressure, flow, rainfall, air temperature and rain clicks or switches. Any sensor can be used for automation, however for irrigation management, in most cases, strategically located soil moisture sensors are used for automating scheduled irrigation events.

iNELLiWEB is not used to remotely operate the irrigation systems. It is used to collect data, record the information and present the live data. Once the wet and dry set points are determined and remotely programmed to the boards on site, the real time data is used to either enable or disable scheduled irrigation events based upon the prevailing root zone moisture levels.

**iNELLiWEB can interface with any stand alone time based irrigation controller or central control system, and is a complimentary product.**

### **Central control systems**

Central control irrigation allows the programming, monitoring and the operation of the irrigation system from a central location. Sophisticated systems allow for some sensors to be connected, such as pressure, flow and rain switches, however they are primarily used to monitor the operation of the system and warn operators of any faults in the field.

Most central control systems are used for the remote operation of irrigation systems in order to program run times, set operating schedules, turn systems on or off and monitor the operational status of multiple sites. The predominant focus of the central control systems is to reduce the labour required to operate and manage the irrigation systems on a day to day basis.

Most central control systems utilise weather based monitoring and calculated evapotranspiration (ET) for automating irrigation events. This is generally achieved by installing a weather station at a safe and convenient location where data is collected. The data collected is processed within the

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central control system. In most cases, data from the one weather station, using the calculated (ET) value with a standard crop factor applied generically to all irrigation management sites is used for irrigation management over large geographic regions.

The INTELLIWEB system utilises specific on site soil moisture data to monitor the prevailing moisture conditions within the root zone of the turf to either enable or disable scheduled irrigation events. The data is site specific, and takes into account the localised prevailing weather conditions, the soil type, the infiltration rate of the soil, the turf height, the amount of thatching and the effectiveness of the irrigation system; all factors that have a direct bearing on irrigation management.

The operational methodology of central control systems is often focussed on labour and time savings. INTELLIWEB not only can save time and labour, but is a management system that is used to increase turf quality and maintain consistent playing surfaces as water efficiently as possible **(providing that the irrigation system is applying water evenly and consistently).**

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