

speed and cargo box capacities are right for you? Tight turning radiuses an issue? Again, having a clear understanding of the tasks you need to complete will determine your UV needs.

Your mechanics' time is always at a premium, so choose a UV that's easy to service. A machine with sealed bearings and few grease points helps reduce maintenance time. If you have multiple machines, they should share service parts. Consider whether investing in a higher-end machine today might reduce your maintenance costs and downtime in the long run. If cash flow is a concern, leasing options can mean a lower monthly payment.

When choosing a UV, plan for what you want the vehicle to do, and the utility capabilities will support similar-level tasks as they arise. ■

Brad Aldridge is a product manager for John Deere Golf.

Selecting irrigation systems

By Pat Johnston

With so many irrigation products in the market, it's important that turf managers understand what they need before they spend money on a new system. Decide what you expect from a system before you determine a total budget for the project.

The most important decision turf managers can make when considering an irrigation installation or renovation is whether or not to hire a certified irrigation designer, who can ensure that the irrigation plan meets your particular needs.

Whether or not you decide to work with an irrigation designer or directly with a distributor, here the questions you need to ask before making a decision:

- How much does the system cost? What is my return on investment?
- Who is the local distributor representative to contact for service issues?
- What kind of equipment training is included? If something goes wrong with

the system, what parts should I have on-hand for quick replacements?

- Is there a nearby site that has this system installed? Can I visit?
- How long is the system under warranty? What does the warranty cover?

When researching a control system, don't become enamored with all the bells and whistles of a system; it's important to know what features you need for your turf area and then maximize your return on investment by selecting a control system that will get the job done.

Important considerations for a control system include: ease of use; flow management and flow sensing; moisture sensing including integration with an ET-based system; and remote-access control.

Water application

When selecting rotors or sprays, turf managers should consider the following:

- Water window: What gives the best distribution in the shortest window?

• Ease of use: Is the rotor or spray easy to adjust or fix?

• Safety/durability: How will the rotor stand up to everyday wear and tear?

A typical turfgrass system needs 85 psi to operate efficiently. A booster pump is necessary to meet that optimal design requirement. While the upfront price of a booster pump package can seem considerable, the energy savings from a high-efficiency pump can represent thousands of dollars over the life of the pump.

After the irrigation system is installed, it's important to follow the manufacturer-recommended maintenance schedule. A well-designed, properly installed and maintained irrigation system is the best way to keep your turfgrass green and healthy for years to come. ■

Pat Johnston is water management sales resource consultant for Horizon Distributors, Inc.

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