



VENETIAN GOLF AND RIVER CLUB
A GUIDE TO VENETIAN RESIDENTIAL IRRIGATION



The purpose of this document is to educate you just a bit on the irrigation system serving your property. It's not meant to make anyone an expert on irrigation but rather attempts to assist the average person with understanding how their system works and how each of its components fit together to deliver water to your lawn and plants. You should be a more comfortable home owner when you understand how various parts of your home and property fit together. You don't need to be an electrician to understand how electricity flows through a light switch or receptacle to provide light or run a refrigerator but you probably know enough about it to call an expert when something goes wrong. This pamphlet was prepared to make you aware enough to call an expert when something goes awry with your irrigation system.

First things first:

- The irrigation water for our community is controlled by the VCDD. They operate the main pumps within the community and set the days and times for property owners to irrigate.
- The amount of water allowed for VG&RC as a whole is controlled by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). The community is allocated a certain amount of water each month and the community as a whole can be fined up to \$10,000.00 a day, for over usage! That's why each home is on a schedule that will keep VG&RC from being fined: you are part of VG&RC so you will help pay the fine. Water is expensive in Florida - even reclaimed water. You yourself can, and may, be fined if your irrigation controller malfunctions or is set to allow more water than permitted. Important information is found at: [IRRIGATION WATER NOTICE](#).
- The property owner is ALWAYS responsible for irrigation violations just as he/she is for other violations of the Master Declaration. Your landscaper, your friend, your neighborhood irrigation "expert", may assume some duties relating to maintenance and operation of your controller, but when improper operation occurs, they will not be held responsible - you, the property owner, will be. This applies even if you're on vacation somewhere, head north for the summer, become ill, forget, or simply just don't pay attention to your property. No one but you will ever be fined for irrigation violations on your property and "the dog ate my homework" excuse seldom works.
- In the event of a power outage or power surge, the GFI (Ground Fault Interrupter) circuit supplying electrical power to your controller may trip and it must be reset for the controller to operate. Learn where the GFIs in your home are located. The GFI supplying the controller is most likely located in the garage if it's not on the outside outlet the controller is plugged into. When the landscaper is doing a wet check on your property, ask him to show you how he does it. It takes just a few minutes to learn how and that knowledge can be very helpful to you. If you're not available to check your GFIs make certain a friend, neighbor, or house sitter does so for you and has access to them.
- No part of your irrigation works by magic. Once you become familiar with how the various interrelated parts function and work together to deliver water to your property, you'll be better informed and be able to participate in the process - if only to learn when to call an expert, just as you would call an electrician when necessary. You may be able to clean a filter or two but don't try to rewire your controller or clean the valves or diaphragm!

EMAIL FROM THE VENETIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The following email from the VCCD is shown below in its entirety for a more complete explanation of "wet check days" and more. Every home owner should understand how and why the VCDD controls the irrigation water supply.

"April 5, 2019

Dear Venetian Homeowners,

As of April 8, 2018, the hours to wet check your irrigation system will change.

Wet check hours will be Mondays and Thursdays from 7 a.m. - 12 noon.

Those of you who reside in a neighborhood with a sub-association need not do anything. Your landscape company will also be advised.

Please click on the link below for a copy of the Irrigation Schedule.

[Irrigation Schedule](#)

There have been some questions regarding the scheduling of our irrigation pumps and hopefully, the following explanation will help you better understand how it is determined when water is available for irrigation purposes.

Each residential lot within the VG&RC is normally scheduled to receive irrigation water once per week per the "Residential Irrigation Schedule". When we have sufficient rainfall, approximately one-half inch or more, the irrigation pumps will not be turned on for the following day or two due to sufficient water being provided to our lawns and plantings by Mother Nature. This is a common occurrence during the summer months but also occurs from time to time during other seasons of the year. Conversely, to accommodate "drought" conditions, the Venetian CDD established a second day in the week when irrigation water is available to each property. This is known as "Block II". Block II is in operation when it becomes apparent that lawns are being stressed due to the lack of moisture. These periods normally occur after the "rainy season" is over but temperatures are still high or alternatively, in the spring period where temperatures have increased but the rains have not yet commenced.

While we would like to be able to use Block II more extensively than we do, we must stay within a maximum usage amount dictated to us by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). In essence, to stay within this limit, the number of days we make Block II available cannot exceed the number of days that we "shut down" Block I. This is somewhat of a balancing act and the reason why we cannot simply turn on Block II at some given time and turn it off at some later date.

The fact that Block II is not available every day does not affect how your individual irrigation timers are set. They should be programmed as indicated on the "Residential Irrigation Schedule". If the pumps are running, you will get water. If they are not, your zone valves will open but no water will be available. It's as simple as that. There is no need to change your irrigation timer once Block II is set. That said; don't overlook changing your irrigation timer to accommodate time changes due to Daylight Savings Time. The usage information we receive indicates that many residents do not do this on a timely basis.

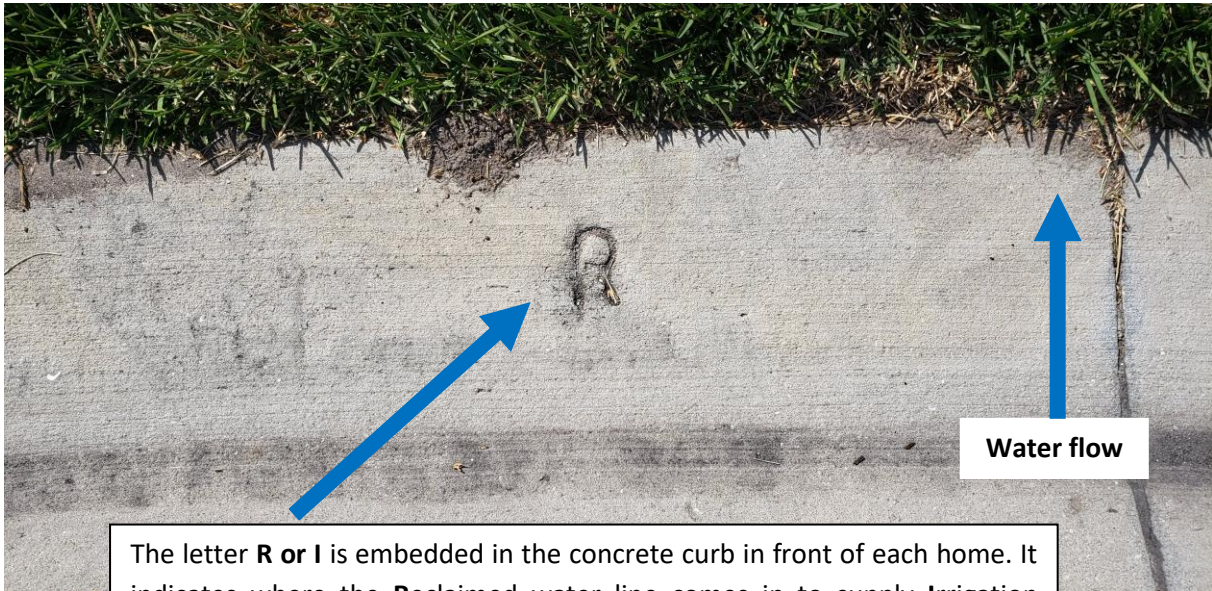
If you are in a neighborhood with an HOA or Condo Association, the above may be of interest but your irrigation timers are normally controlled by your neighborhood landscape contractor. In addition, we also attempt to provide scheduling information to other landscape contractors working for homeowners who contract directly for landscape maintenance services, but we cannot assure you that they have your timers programmed correctly. That is your responsibility.

In summary, our irrigation water is a valuable resource. We must use it in way that it provides the most benefit for the amount we are allotted by SWFWMD. And remember, complying with the Residential Irrigation Schedule will not only assure that you will not be getting a violation notice from the POA, it also means that more water will be available for additional Block II days!"

SOME ANCILLARY ITEMS OF INTEREST

FROM THE BEGINNING

THE CURB OUT FRONT



The letter **R** or **I** is embedded in the concrete curb in front of each home. It indicates where the Reclaimed water line comes in to supply Irrigation water to the home. Other letters in the curb are **W** for the potable water line and **S** for the sanitary/sewage line. The occasional **V** indicates a valve.

THE ROOFTOP RAIN SENSOR



The rain sensor on your roof is designed to send a STOP signal to the controller when enough rain has fallen so that the lawn and plants should not need supplemental water. Unfortunately they often fail in that regard so it's best to bypass that function in the controller with the inside switch. In any event the VCDD will not activate the main pumps if sufficient rain has fallen.

Home GFIs

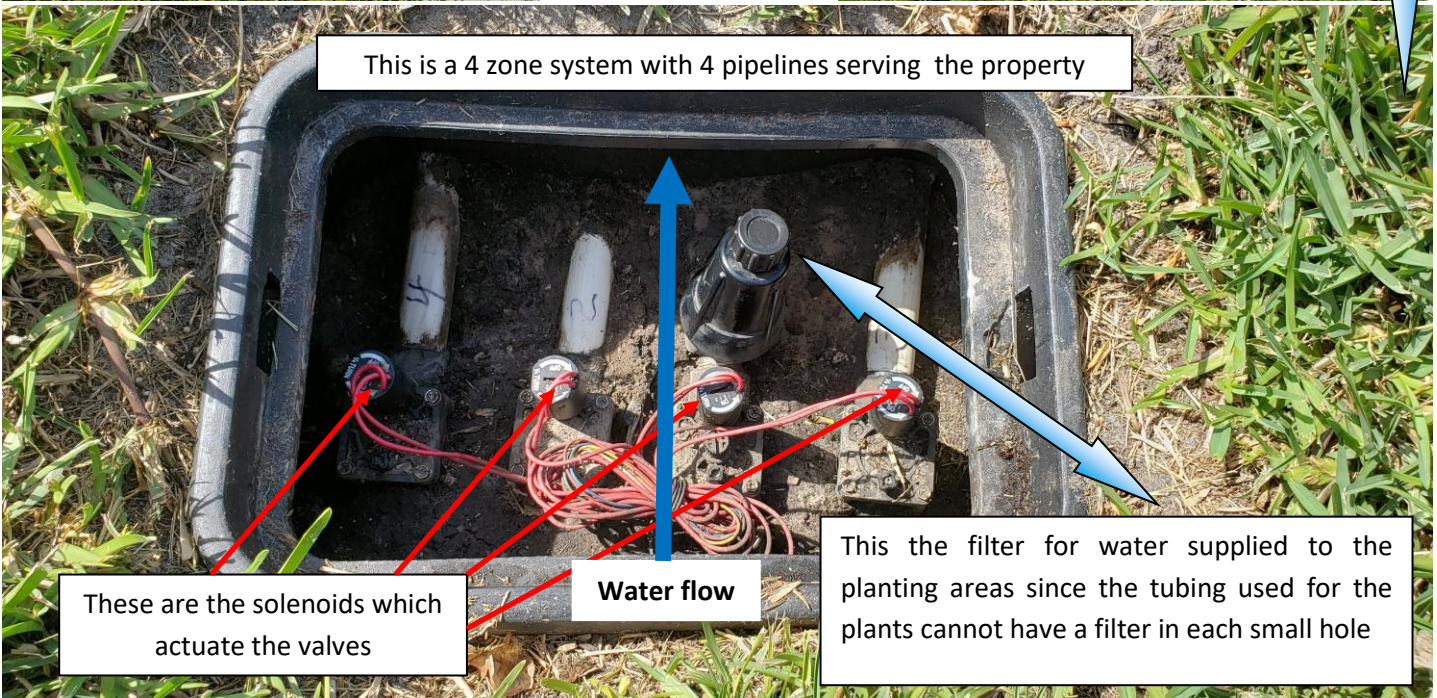
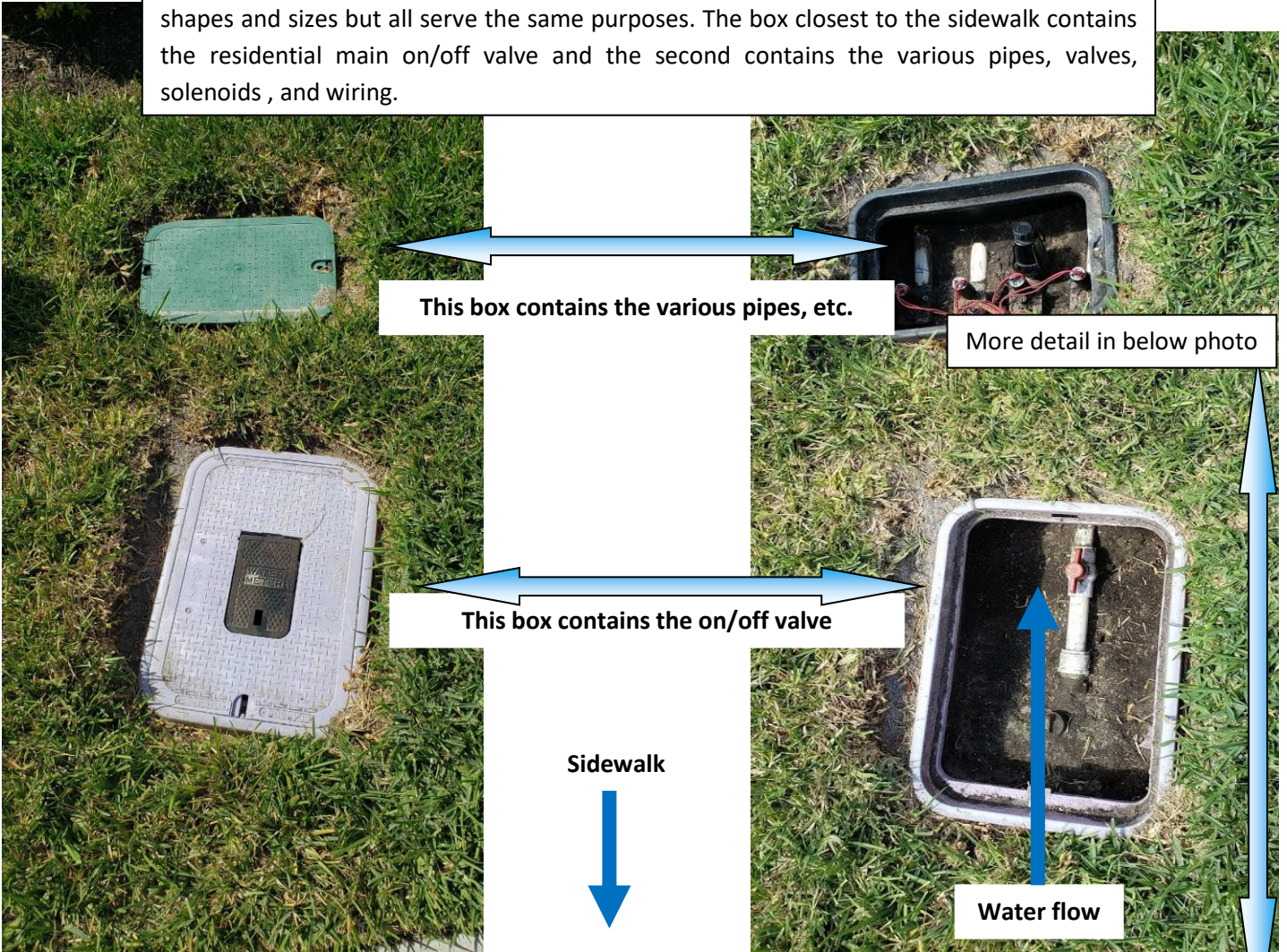


NORMAL

TRIPPED

AMBER LIGHT

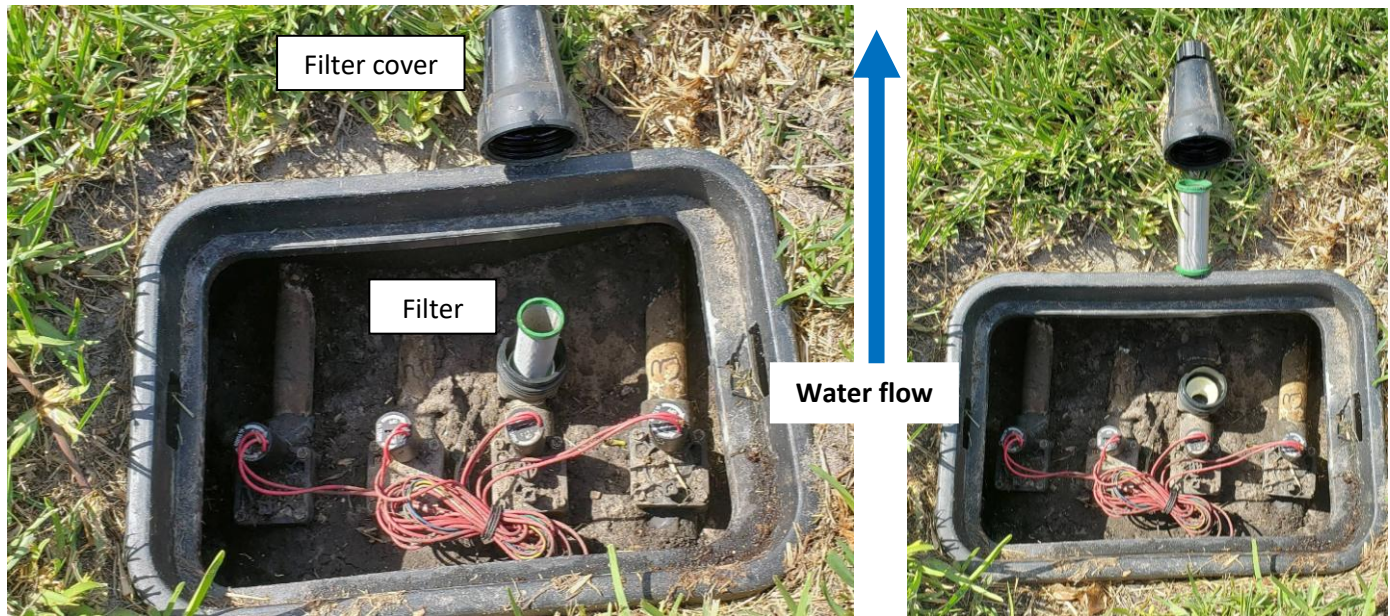
Generally two irrigation related boxes are located near the sidewalk. They come in several shapes and sizes but all serve the same purposes. The box closest to the sidewalk contains the residential main on/off valve and the second contains the various pipes, valves, solenoids, and wiring.



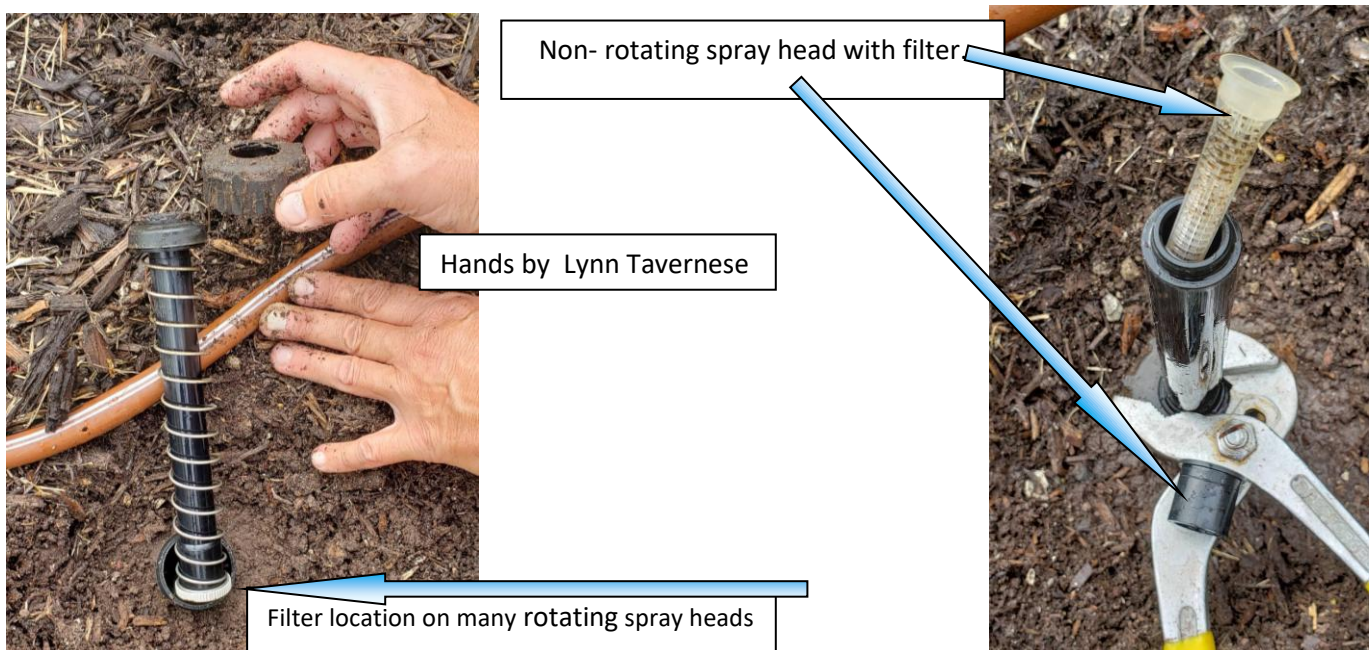
This box contains the necessary solenoids, valves, pipes, and wiring to run the system

TWO TYPES OF IRRIGATION FILTERS USED IN STANDARD SYSTEMS

This is the filter used for the irrigation line supplying water to 1/2 inch tubing winding through the planting areas. In the left photo the filter cap has been removed exposing the actual filter. In the right photo both the cap and the filter have been removed. The filter cap is easily removed by unscrewing it and when replaced is tightened by hand. The filter itself is a hollow metallic tube open on each end and easily cleaned with plain water and a toothbrush. It's recommended that the filter be removed and cleaned twice each year - DO NOT ATTEMPT at times when water is being supplied by the CDD such as Wet Check days: a geyser may ensue!



Most pop-up non-rotating irrigation heads have the filter pictured below. Many of the rotating spray heads have their filter in the bottom of the removable tube - the same type tube pictured here but just with a different head. They pop right out of the tube and are cleaned with plain water. Make sure the system is off first!



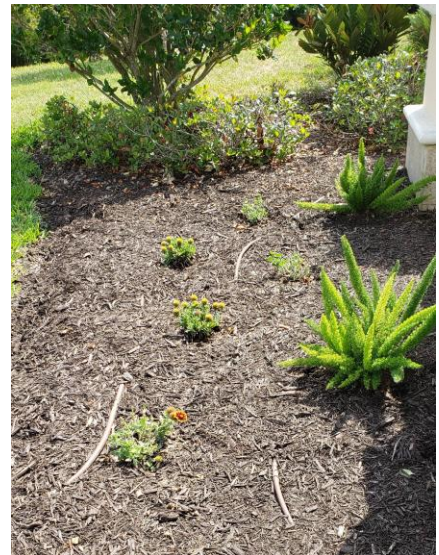
WHAT'S IN THE YARD ?

TYPICAL IRRIGATION SPRINKLER



The sprinkler on the left is in most yards. On the right is the same type disassembled.

IRRIGATION DRIP TUBING



Drip tubing is located in planting areas. Small holes every 18 inches allow measured amounts of water to drip onto the soil. Each hole has a pressure reducing device imbedded to control the flow. That's why large amounts of water is not squirting out! Do **NOT** attempt to make additional holes or make the existing hole larger.

DONUTS

Every sprinkler needs a concrete donut. Which kind is in your yard?

CLEAN DONUT & SPRINKLER



Concrete donuts should be placed around every irrigation head on the property - even those located within mulched areas. Donuts hold back encroaching grass & mulch so that the riser and nozzle can rise to the occasion.

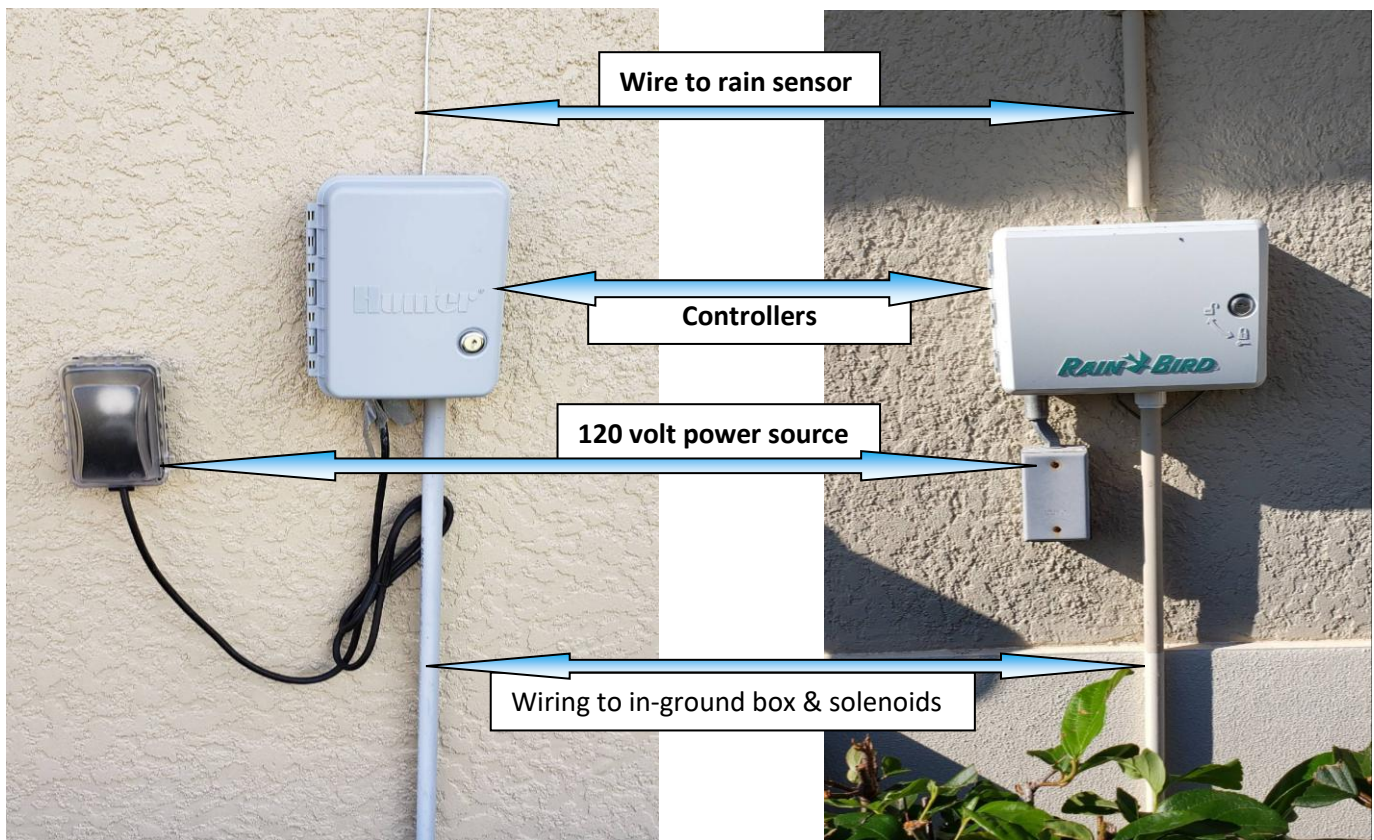
LOOKING FOR TROUBLE



It's in here somewhere. Honest!

THE IRRIGATION CONTROLLER

The irrigation controller is normally located on the garage side of your home. It electrically controls the solenoids that operate the valves that either start or stop the water flow through your irrigation lines. The day of the week, time of day, and amount of time allowed for each zone (or line) is determined by the irrigation controller. The lines are all PVC pipe as they leave the in-ground irrigation box but one is then connected to the 1/2 inch low-density polyethylene tubing for the planting areas and the others to smaller (1/2 inch) PVC pipes and heavy "rubber-like" flexible lines to the lawn pop-up heads. The controller also reduces the voltage in the lines operating the solenoids. The voltage is reduced in the controller by a small transformer that takes the standard 120 volts coming from the home electrical system and reduces it to 14 volts. This is for safety reasons since the wires are buried. The time of day and amount of time for each zone (or line) is determined by the irrigation controller. There's also a small battery within the controller to maintain programming in the event of a power outage. The battery should be replaced every 2 years.



It's important to note that there's two ways in which the controller receives the 120 volts needed to power the system. The first is a standard plug-in to an outdoor rated electrical fixture and the second is to a hard wired junction box on the outside wall. In **EVERY** case the connection is through a Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) either on the outside as part of the electrical outlet **OR** on an inside garage wall. A GFI is a type of electrical outlet designed to protect you and your family against electrical shock, fire, or electrocution. In the event of a power surge the GFI may trip creating an open circuit and cutting power to the controller: in the event of a power outage the controller will not receive power even when power is restored to the home.

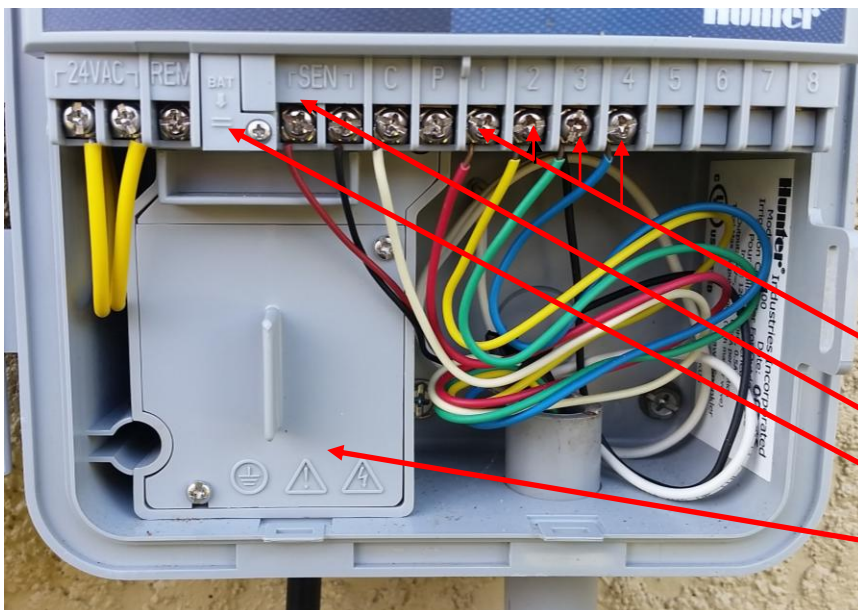
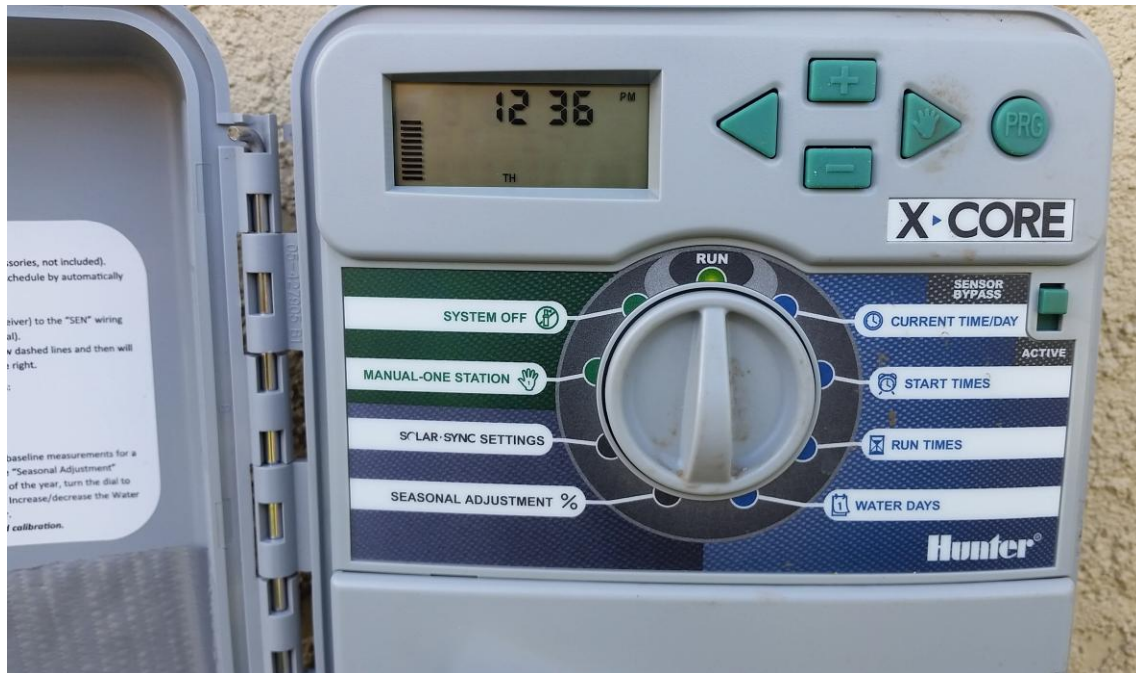
It's very important to repeat that in the event of a GFI incident or a power loss the controller will **NOT** receive power. If it has no power then there are no 120 volts available to the transformer for it to convert to the 14 volts required to run the system. The battery will maintain the various time and zone settings already programmed into the controller but the required voltage to operate solenoids will **NOT** be delivered. You must check that the GFI has not tripped or your system will not deliver water as intended. You cannot tell just by looking at the controller if it's getting the power it needs.

INSIDE THE IRRIGATION CONTROLLER

This is the inside of the Hunter X-Core controller. Other styles of the Hunter brand and even other brands all have the same basic controls. All have the same function and nearly identical ways of setting times, dates, etc. The door has been opened to show that this controller is showing the correct time and day of week. The photo was taken at 12:36 PM on a Thursday which is correct. If only the year was shown and flashing it would indicate that there was an interruption of power and the date and time would need to be reset. The original programming setting will hold in the event of a power outage **IF** the battery is functional.

This link to the POA website shows important information about your controller:

<http://www.venetianpoa.com/File?expandedFolder=Resident%20Documents%252F Irrigation%252F>



The cover has been removed to show some of the inner parts. The transformer is still covered and should always remain so. From the connected wires you can see that this is a 4 zone system (numbers 1-4) , the red, yellow, green, and blue wires.

WIRES TO THE ZONES

RAIN SENSOR

BATTERY

TRANSFORMER

AND FINALLY !

Some very important things to remember:

- The property owner is **always** responsible for maintaining the correct schedule to avoid irrigation violations.
- When you leave the area, be certain that you have someone with the ability to access your property (including the garage) who can reset the GFIs if necessary. AND, did you know that in most cases your garage door is also on a GFI controlled circuit? Your garage door will not function if the GFI is tripped; a front door key will be invaluable in that case since your garage door will not respond to your remote.
- The filters on your system should be cleaned twice a year. Clogged filters slow and can even prevent water from reaching your lawn.
- Make certain all your popup nozzles are protected by a concrete donut. And, make sure you or your landscaper keeps grass or mulch from intruding so it won't block the nozzles.
- Don't forget to have the controller's time changed for Daylight Savings Time. If not, you will either miss an hour of irrigation or run over an hour into a violation time. If you can't do this ensure your landscaper does.
- It's really important that you take responsibility for YOUR irrigation system. Not necessarily by doing everything or even anything by yourself - though it's not that difficult - but by actively overseeing those who do. Remember that your landscaper, either private or through your association, likely has many customers and may occasionally overlook something important in your yard. Make sure your filters and donuts are kept clean and that wet checks are done thoroughly and at least monthly. You should obtain necessary contact information for your landscaper and contact them - or your association Property Manager - every time you think it's necessary. Remember that the "squeaky wheel" gets the grease so squeak when necessary to maintain your irrigation system.
- An excellent way to get started taking charge of your property is to learn how to conduct wet checks. It's really simple to learn how and you may even find things that require your landscapers attention.
- Good luck and don't forget to ask questions as necessary.