Irrigation Association Certification Program
30 Years and Counting

The Certification Program at the Irrigation Association was started in 1983. There was a need within the industry to teach and promote professional education and practices.

Today the IA Certifications are the industry standard and that is why in 2007 the Environmental Protection Agency chose the IA certifications as the first program to be recognized in their WaterSense Partner designation. Today there are 13 separate certifications within the program. Also some of the educational material developed by the IA is used to support the Certification Program.

Over the last 30 years the IA Certification Program could not have been possible without the time and effort of volunteer members of the IA. Thank you to all of the volunteers over the years for your dedication to our industry.

IA Certification Board Chairs 1983 - 2014

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A Brief History of W.D. Allen Company, Chicago, Illinois USA

The company was founded by William D. Allen in 1887. Initially they produced leather goods then expanded their product line in the 1890’s to include fire sprinkler equipment and lawn sprinklers. Throughout the years W.D. Allen made over 100 types of lawn sprinklers under the names W.D. Allen, Rain King, Allenco and also made sprinklers for Sears, Roebuck and Company and other companies around the world. If you collect antique and collectable sprinklers, chances are a W.D. Allen sprinkler can be easily found.
Golf Course Irrigation

No one knows when the first irrigation system was installed on a golf course. Irrigation has been used on golf courses for many years. The turf always needs water and that has lead to some of the best innovations in the irrigation industry. Some of which are sprinklers with check valves, automatic valve in-head, plastics and high quality nozzles. This is also where central/satellite control systems were perfected. Today, saving water is just part of the routine maintenance on every golf course throughout the world.
A Brief History of the John A. Brooks Company

Founded in 1915, the John A. Brooks Company was the first company in the world to successfully develop, install and market in-ground lawn sprinkling systems.

The company’s founder, John A. Brooks (1871–1958), was awarded numerous patents for early irrigation innovations including patent number 1,192,743, on July 25, 1916 for a "lawn sprinkling means", an early ancestor of today’s modern pop-up lawn sprinklers. In 1926, he patented a clock-actuated sprinkler system launching the era of truly modern systems.

Clients of the Brooks Company read like a Who’s Who of early modern Detroit: Henry Ford, S.S. Kresge, the Dodge brothers, and other leading industrialists. The company developed a national reputation and supervised installation of irrigation systems for Central Park in New York, the United States Capital in Washington, DC, and Grant Park in Chicago. Franchise dealers were established throughout the country from Los Angeles to the Palm Beach area.

Early Brooks employees became innovators in their own right. Company secretary Max Snoddy later founded Texas Lawn Sprinkler Company (TELSCO), manufacturer of the Weathermatic brand in Dallas.

In 1988, Marc Dutton Irrigation, Inc. acquired the John A. Brooks Company, which was the oldest operating lawn sprinkler installation firm in the world and still operates in the Detroit, Michigan area and suburbs. Next year is their 100th anniversary.

MARC DUTTON IRRIGATION, INC.
4720 Hatchery, Waterford, Michigan 48329  Phone: (248) 674-4470
www.marcduttonirrigation.com
Irrigation In The United Kingdom

The idea of using irrigation in the United Kingdom may seem a little funny to some, but sometimes you need flexibility to water in times of need. Averages of rainfall per year: England 33.7”; Northern Ireland 43.8”; Scotland 59.8”; and Wales 56.4”. Agriculture has the most need for irrigation but as you can tell from the magazine ad shown above, there is always a need for landscape/turf irrigation.
How does a Korean War veteran and FBI Special Agent end up in the wholesale distribution business? Back in 1960, Bud Knowles was a special agent with the FBI, leading the Dayton, Ohio office. But he had a yearning to work for himself and saw the opportunity to start a landscape company. From this spark of inspiration, he went to work. Bud combined the organizational skills learned in the Marine Corps, where he was a Second Lieutenant during the Korean War, together with his interest in business and accounting developed during his time at Wichita State University.

Wolf Creek Company began in 1961 as a landscaping company, but quickly blossomed with the addition of a retail garden center, nursery business and eventually irrigation installation. From the very beginning supportive customer relationships and fair business dealing were the hallmarks of Bud's philosophy, winning him the loyalty of both customers and suppliers. Agricultural irrigation was added with the Valley (Valmont) and Bauer product lines. Wolf Creek is focused on leadership in wholesale distribution.

By the 1970's, Bud Knowles began consolidating the burgeoning operation into a single focus: to be the top-ranked wholesale distributor in the area. The company's service area rapidly expanded from just one portion of Ohio to a broad regional area encompassing Ohio, western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky. Today Bud enjoys retirement. His sons, Scott and Chris, have taken over the operation.

As Wolf Creek Company moves past its 50th year in business, they know that their success depends on the success of their customers.
Pioneer in Irrigation - Farid Safadi

A Brief Biography of Farid Safadi

Farid Safadi was born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1938. He came to the US in 1960 and earned a Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1965 he returned to Lebanon and started working for Johns Manville International Corporation.

Based out of Beirut, Farid traveled all over North Africa, the Middle East, and South West Asia, covering building materials, thermal insulations, and pipe products. In the early 1970’s, when Johns Manville acquired Buckner Irrigation, Farid was chosen to receive training in irrigation. So in 1974, he attended a special program at California State University, Fresno specifically set up to train company personnel on modern irrigation design, products, and techniques. This started his journey with irrigation.

From 1975 until 1982, Farid set up a new department in the Beirut office and became the Product Marketing Manager for irrigation products. In 1983 Farid left Johns Manville to start his own company, Modern Resources Establishment. The main activity of this company was directed almost exclusively towards modern irrigation systems in general, and particularly towards landscape irrigation for home gardens, commercial institutions and sport fields.

Being the only company of its kind at the start, it enjoyed immediate and very wide acceptance in the market at all levels of the business. Modern Resources has been the regional distributor of many American, Australian, Italian, and other irrigation manufacturers. At the age of 75, Farid and his company are still very active in the Lebanese market and he still enjoys getting his hands dirty from time to time.
A Brief Biography of Chet Sarsfield

1925 - 2013

In 1949 Chet Sarsfield moved from New York state to Dallas, Texas and the rest is history. He answered a want ad in the local newspaper and got the job. It was working for a contractor installing and selling lawn sprinklers. He once was quoted, that he would work at this company until ‘something better comes along’. He devoted the remainder of his life to his family and the irrigation industry.

Whenever you have a conversation about Chet, you would always include his wife, Wanda. They were together for over 35 years and both loved the irrigation industry.

In 1965 they created, Irrigation Technical Services to give an unbiased opinion in technical manuals for the industry. The two classic manuals are the ABC’s of Lawn Sprinkler Systems and the Irrigation Technical Manual and both of these reference manuals are still in use today.

Over the years Chet was presented with numerous awards including the ASIC Lifetime Achievement award, and the IA’s National Water and Energy Conservation award. He was one of the original seven founding members in forming the American Society of Irrigation Consultants, as well as an original member of the IA’s Certification Board.

Without a doubt, we are all very glad that he answered that newspaper ad in 1949.
Character Sprinklers Over The Years

“Sprinklin’ Sam” Sprinkler
1936

Cowboy Lasso Sprinkler
1953

Mary Jane Sprinkler
1935

“Sprinklin’ Sam” Sprinkler
1940

Mermaid Sprinkler
1928

Popular Mechanics Sprinkler Plans
1954

Sprinkler Plans
1954

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Irrigation Association People Over the Years

How Many Do You Recognize?
“From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: that we are here for the sake of each other - above all for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of my fellow men, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received.” — Albert Einstein
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* Deceased

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