



Less Water - Less Stress - More Revenue!

Five landscape pros from across the country share how one product has had a big impact on their business. Hydretain, also sold as LESCO Moisture Manager, is a unique water management technology that converts soil moisture vapor into plant usable water droplets. This process reduces evaporative loss and makes more water available to the plant, resulting in lower water requirements and less stress for both you and your landscapes.

When Customers Simply Don't Water Enough

For Richard Benbow, Owner of the Lawn Doctor Franchise in Southern Wake County, NC, LESCO Moisture Manager provides a profitable solution to improve quality where customers simply won't water enough. He began offering the product as a supplemental application to improve seed germination. "I used the liquid all last year during seeding season. I

used it primarily as a supplement, as another billable item, and I charged them \$25 per 1,000 sq. ft. It helps with seeding because I know customers are not going to water as much as they should. The places where I used it, the lawns came in fuller," says Benbow. By improving seed germination with less water, Moisture Manager also gave Benbow the opportunity to offer seeding services on projects he would not have gone after in the past. "I tend not to push seeding on larger areas, because I know that they won't water like they're supposed to, but with Moisture Manager, I felt like they could do it, and the lawns came in much better."

Benbow was introduced to the granular version of Moisture Manager last December. With increased flexibility, the dry spreader application provides the opportunity for him to offer the product as a regular maintenance service. "With the granular, I'll be able to put it out on any lawn."

While many companies focus on

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water savings as the key selling point for Moisture Manager services, Benbow is taking a different approach. He believes that the product will have the biggest impact for customers who aren't watering enough on a regular basis. "I know that if they haven't been watering, they are not going to water. Moisture Manager is going to help me help people that won't give their grass water when they are supposed to. I'm telling them to continue to water as they have been doing and let this fill in so that they'll have better results."

Let's Talk ROI

Amid one of the worst droughts in recorded history, EcoFert, Inc. managed to save one customer nearly \$70,000 in water costs. Established in 1930, Holy Sepulcher is a Catholic cemetery located in Orange, CA. At thirty-three acres, it is the largest of the burial grounds overseen by the Diocese of Orange, and is the final resting place of many Diocesan priests.

Significant water savings at Holy Sepulcher began last year when EcoFert introduced the Diocese to their Water Conservation Program. "We started our Water Conservation Program, using LESCO Moisture Manager, in June of 2015. What we found is from June 2015 through the end of May 2016, when we compare literally year over year, we saved the Diocese \$68,248 dollars in actual water savings. Compared to what they paid us for the service that's a 380% return on investment," says Lou Franson, President of EcoFert, Inc.

In addition to the water and cost savings, their quality has also improved. "The most important thing about cemeteries is that it must look good, it must be green. According to Michael Wesner who is the Director of the Diocese of Orange, to quote him 'It is the best the cemetery has ever looked,'" declared Lou.

Competitive Advantage

As water availability challenges continue to plague Southern California, many companies have struggled to grow or even sustain business. Drought has made it difficult to create and maintain beautiful turf without increasing water usage and/or cost to the client. In many cases, watering restrictions have made it impossible to use more water, putting limitations on the work that can be done. For Coast Landscaping Inc. the answer to that problem was LESCO Moisture Manager. "We needed to figure out a better solution to not only keep our customers happy with their landscapes and costs while also being responsible with current water restrictions and staying within budgets. Moisture Manager has changed the way we do turf and the results speak for themselves," says Tyler Mason, Controller and Account Manager for Coast Landscaping Inc.

For Mason, the product has done more than just save water, money and landscapes. "Moisture Manager has helped our business grow by offering a solution other companies aren't doing. It gives us a point of differentiation versus other landscape companies. Neighboring communities to what we maintain are noticing the outcomes and are not only asking questions but asking us to bid their projects!" To help customers get started with the product, Coast Landscaping Inc. offered them a free trial area. Those small trials have turned into added revenue and new accounts. "They see that it doesn't make sense not to do it. I've actually had manage-

ment companies of the homeowners associations I work with recommend Moisture Manager on all other properties that they manage. Many of them even hired our company to work their other properties because of our unique offering of Moisture Manager. It's actually gained more jobs for us because the management companies see the value."

Watering Restrictions? No Problem!

Drought and watering restrictions present a challenge for many landscape companies. For Seaman's Lawn and Landscape, that challenge has become a profitable opportunity. Located in North Texas, Seaman's is a full service landscape company that started offering Hydretain several years ago. "Hydretain has given our customers the ability to have a green, healthy yard with minimal amount of watering. It is a great upsell product that maintains a healthy lawn despite watering restrictions," says Erik Seaman, Co-owner and Manager of the Fertilization Division.

The company, which has been in business for over 20 years, has built a great reputation in the Dallas area. Hydretain is helping to maintain that reputation despite recurrent drought and year-round watering restrictions. "When you look at a neighborhood and your customer's yards are green when the rest of them are wilting and yellowing out, that has the greatest impact," says Erik. "When your customer is watering less and their yard is green, it makes them very happy." In an area where watering restrictions are the new norm, many homeowners struggle to simply maintain quality. Through their Hydretain service, Seaman's is helping customers keep green yards and save money on their water bill. "The 50% reduction in watering is a reality here. We've been able to save people a ton of money on their water bill and still get great results on the turf." The service has even helped them gain new customers, touts Erik,

"when you can only water once or twice a week, Hydretain helps keep the customers' lawns looking like they are cheating. Neighbors wonder what they are doing, and they talk."

Stress-Free Installs

For Matt Parsons, President of Parsons Landscape Services, Inc. in Ft. Myers, FL, water management used to be a big challenge for small landscape repairs or patch installations. "The problem that you run into in those applications is you have an irrigation zone that may cover most of the front yard, but let's say you are only putting in a few pieces of sod. If you run the irrigation enough to water those few pieces, you end up over watering the rest of the lawn," says Parsons. "We are cautious about how much water we use because of all the issues you get related to over watering such as fungus, and increased insect activity. We started

using LESCO Moisture Manager in those applications and it made it big difference on how well the grass performed and rooted in, it seemed to reduce the stress from lack of water."

Beyond the benefits for turf, Parsons has also experienced significant labor savings for shrubs and other landscape installations. When replacing a few plants throughout a community, it is not always practical or possible to run an irrigation system with the frequency needed to for establishment. Parsons uses Moisture Manager in those scenarios to reduce watering needs. "There is a cost savings benefit for us, because it will limit the need for us to go out and hand water," claims Parsons.

For more comments from each company, search "Less Water, Less Stress" on Lawncandlandscape.com.

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