



Press Release: for Immediate Issue

City of Rapid City Sustainability Committee recognizes **Rapid City Central Irrigation Project**

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014 12:30 PM

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

The Rapid City Sustainability Committee will be presenting the Rapid City Central Irrigation Control Project a Sustainability Award at the March 13<sup>th</sup> Parks Board Meeting and at the March 17<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting. The award will go to Rapid City Parks Department and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street Design Studio.

The Rapid City central irrigation control project was a beginning effort by the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Department to better manage and reduce the amount of potable water utilized for irrigation. A new computer was purchased and placed in the Parks Maintenance office with the TORO Sentinel central control software installed on it. Two weather stations, located at the CSAC building and on the Parks Maintenance office were installed to supply weather data to the central control computer. Five parks (Memorial, Roosevelt, Founders, Sioux, and Canyon Lake Park) and 1 cemetery (Mt. View) had all the irrigation controllers removed and replaced with TORO sentinel controllers that are able to be controlled and operated by a central control computer. The Parks Department is now able to directly schedule and operate the 16 controllers from one computer. In addition, the system is able to react immediately to changing weather and automatically schedule watering delays after rain events. The Parks Department is currently establishing a management and implementation plan to expand the central control system city-wide and bring the existing irrigation systems in parks, recreation facilities and landscaped areas online. To increase water conservation in the coming irrigation seasons, Parks staff will begin utilizing the ET watering feature, longer rain delays, and flow sensing abilities to monitor and set water usage goals.

Eirik Heikes, the Committee Chairperson, commented that "this is a huge step for Rapid City and these simple and cost effective implementations will save millions of gallons of water and will save tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars in operation and water value. An expected return on investment is less than 2 years, according to initial calculations." Additionally, the Sustainability Committee was formed 3 years ago with 8 goals to be accomplished, and this effort by Parks and City accomplishes the 6<sup>th</sup> on the list. This marks a significant accomplishment for the community.

