Irrigation practice for The University of Colorado

Here is a little information for all that may need to answer some frequently asked questions about the irrigation practice for the university.

- The University irrigation system is controlled by a central control computer.(TORO NETWORK 8000)
- The system has its own weather station, which can evaluate wind speed, rain amounts, and calculate evaporative transpiration rate. Evaporative transpiration rate is the amount of water that has been lost in the soil from wind, sun, and strength of radiant sunlight.
- The network also uses the weather station to monitor conditions during a night of irrigation. If there is rainfall above a set amount the station will stop the irrigation cycle for the night and also if the wind speed is greater than a set amount it will cancel irrigation.
- We use RAW water for irrigation from the ANDERSON DITCH (for the majority of the campus). The university has owned these rights since the late 1800's.
- We reprogrammed the computer to run more efficiently by correcting data in the computer used in the calculations of irrigation run times. Also we now have greater control of the irrigation on campus to be able to turn off certain areas and not give them more water than needed.
- The Network 8000 has the ability to be able to adjust individual zone runtimes to account for wet areas and microclimates. These adjustments are made over a period of time as the campus turf becomes healthier and drainage issues are corrected.
- Prior to reprogramming the irrigation computer we had run times for an irrigation cycle that would start at 9pm and finish around 830am. With the changes we will not start watering until 10pm and will be finished before 7am.
- There are other benefits to the reprogramming. By changing the way the system runs we are able to also conserve on energy used to run the pump stations that deliver the water. With energy savings you are also conserving water which is used to generate the electricity.
- We have reduced irrigation to many locations around campus by 50% or in some cases turned the irrigation off entirely
- We have shifted to a deep and infrequent watering method to try to increase plant health and root depth to be able to make better use of the water that is used and not have to water every night.
- The University is extremely concerned about the drought and these are a few of the changes the campus has made to help with conservation of our precious resource!