

4. HydroPoint Data Systems. As much as 60% of urban water is used for landscaping, about half of which is unnecessarily wasted by overwatering. Worse, an overwatered landscape and poor landscape design are a significant cause of structural damage, rot, and mold problems. The WeatherTRAK line of products by HyrdoPoint Data Systems is a state-of-the-art irrigation controller that automatically adjusts water delivery amounts based upon only the amount of water needed. The system is designed to prevent wasteful overwatering, as well as underwatering. The system takes a number of variables into account: the actual current weather, data from past weather, local soil type, landscape plant type, and even the expected weather in the upcoming days. This is accomplished by using WeatherTRAK's patented ET Everywhere service, a wireless communications system that delivers daily weather updates to the WeatherTRAK ET controller and then adjusts the irrigation schedule accordingly. Each day HydroPoint collects, analyzes, and validates weather data from over 14,000 weather stations across the United States. Using this data, HydroPoint models the weather down to one square kilometer. Local weather updates are broadcast nightly to each controller via HydroPoint's wireless network.

Contractors report that installation is simple, and the required wiring is nearly identical to timer-style control circuits. After installation, the system needs to be programmed only once, and the network takes over from there. Case studies have shown water savings of 15% to 50% in both residential and commercial applications. More info: Hydropoint.com.



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WeatherTRAK



YOLO Colorhouse

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After years of owning a custom paint and plaster finish company, and with a fine-arts background, company owners Virginia Young (YO) and Janie Lowe (LO), founded YOLO Colorhouse in 2005. YOLO combines premium, zero-VOC paints with a limited, designer-selected palette of colors, all inspired by the natural world and all specifically designed for interiors. By taking advantage of the staff's extensive design expertise, everything at YOLO is designed around simplifying the color selection process. For example, rather than looking through hundreds or even thousands of colors, the YOLO palette is intentionally limited to just 40 carefully chosen hues that have proved popular over the years. This palette is divided into seven basic color families, and each color is simply numbered to prevent the name of the color from biasing the client's opinion. YOLO Colorhouse zero-VOC paints are available in flat, satin, and semi-gloss and are certified by Green Seal for VOC content, durability, performance, and manufacturing practices.

To avoid wasting paint with multiple small samples, YOLO sells poster-sized 23x27-inch color samples, painted with real paint. They also sell a design kit, which includes 40 colored cards with suggestions for possible applications and combinations. The design kit is for homeowners and tradespeople alike. More info: Yolocolorhouse.com.

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