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Factors that Affect the Cost of Golf Irrigation Systems

Every golf course is unique. There are many reasons why golf irrigation contractors price systems the way they do and why consultants select the products for your golf course. Some reasons are very obvious while others are more subtle. We've listed the factors that can affect the cost of golf irrigation systems to help you get acquainted with the decisions we make to build an efficient system for your course.

- **Product Selection / Suppliers & Interpersonal Relationships**– Some installers may have a better working relationship with one supplier and may prefer to deal with that supplier over another. They may be offered better payment terms and some suppliers carry a larger inventories ensuring on time delivery.
- **Quality of Materials** – Quality products will cost more and when used properly will last longer making the initial cost higher. Some products are better suited for the conditions of one golf course and are justifiable used compared to cheaper alternative products installed on other golf courses. In any case, no product should be used without having a five year proven track record in the golf course industry.
- **Course Location** – It is inherently more expensive to hire labour, ship product, transport equipment and set up accommodations in some areas of the country.
- **Course Features** – Every system requires excavation and the costs difference between blasting rock and working with a meter of loam is significant. Other relevant course features that would impact the cost of installation are elevation change and water table.
- **Dirt (new) vs Grass (established)** - Some installers may prefer working on either new construction or established golf courses. They may have specialized equipment for one type of project and not the other.
- **Restoration** – The expectations and reasonableness of the membership, with respect to installation and clean-up, will strongly influence the bottom line.
- **Pump Location** – If the water supply and pump house is located in the middle of the golf course then mainlines are smaller and therefore cheaper and easier to install.
- **Mainline Location** – If mainlines are located along dirt roads, unpaved cart paths or along tree lines, then the clean-up and restoration is much easier.
- **Length of Golf Course / Amount of Irrigated Area** – Typically, a 7200 yard golf course will be more expensive to irrigate than a 6500 or 6800 yard golf course.
- **Accuracy of the Irrigation Design** – If the installer has a reasonable comfort level with the irrigation system design and trusts that the consultant has accurately planned and calculated out the irrigation system quantities, then the installer will not feel obligated to add any contingency amount to cover unforeseen circumstances.
- **Integrity of the Contract Documents** – Most installers will thoroughly read and understand their implication and obligations within the contract documents. The documents should be fair to all parties involved.
- **The People Involved (the consultant, the superintendent, the manger, the members)** – All contractors want to know the people involved, what their intentions are and how willing they are to work together.
- **Other Projects Nearby / Size of the Project** – Most golf contractors travel long distances to go from one job to another and working on two jobs in the same area is cost effective. Conversely, small irrigation projects or projects installed in phases are more expensive in the long run and on a per unit cost basis.