

# water sense



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS  
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## My Personal Experience Using Calsense

Several years ago I was contacted by a Calsense representative and asked if Reed College in Portland, OR would be willing to test drive their water management system and install the ET2000e irrigation controller. This was my first introduction to Calsense controllers and after trying to think of a good reason to say “no”, I half-heartedly agreed. I picked a small area outside the acreage covered under our water rights and plumbed to potable water, with mostly native, well-established plantings and gave them the green light.

I was told glowing accounts on how reliable the controller was and to my surprise it just flat out worked! I was promised out-of-the box, reliable multi-communication options, easy upgrades, and was assured that no “service contract plans” would be required. Calsense would make sure that the controller kept plants healthy and turf green for the length of the trial. As an added benefit, the controllers offered potential water savings when using ET based scheduling in conjunction with a tipping rain bucket. The Calsense Command Center software offered water budget reports with graphs that not only showed us savings to a monthly guideline but also were easy to produce. Not only could we set our own water budgets for the campus, but the alerts function allowed us the ability to monitor our system on a daily basis beginning with the morning ‘Alerts’ report.

Having spent 30 plus years in the profession, I took the stories and



Photo courtesy of Reed College

promises with a grain of salt, as I had heard it all before and was expecting to be underwhelmed; figuring it would be up to me to pull the non-working, abandoned trial controller next fall and toss it into the nearest dumpster. I was amazed as I watched Calsense follow through on every promise. Steve Budinich, Calsense Field Service Rep was on site checking and fine-tuning the install over the ensuing months. I saw much more of Steve as he conducted training sessions, than I did the competitive representatives during the same period. Software training and help in fine tuning the system occurred, as did assisting us in setting up the new web-based Command Center Online software which allowed even more flexibility in controlling our resources from any internet-connected device.

One particular item to note was the benefits of the Calsense handheld remote, the RRe-TRAN. I cannot begin to explain how much of a labor-savings tool this one item was for us on campus! We not only had remote capability, but we were also able to make programming

adjustments in the field, without having to return to the office computer to make changes. This was a huge labor savings in better maintaining the campus by providing on-the-go adjustments based on conditions witnessed in the field.

Ultimately, the competitor was a manufacturer with whom we committed many hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years and whose equipment was less reliable and in greater need of attention than the, rock-solid Calsense irrigation controller installation. Primarily as a result of this experience, we made the decision to switch our central control to Calsense. We completed the final phase of the project in the fall of 2014. So far, we are just as satisfied as paying customers as we were while we were being “courted”. The system works, the company innovates, and the service is second to none!

Written by,  
Knol Simnitt  
Reed College

PHONE

800.572.8608

FAX

760.438.2619

WEB

[www.calsense.com](http://www.calsense.com)

