



## Anatomy 101 of a Sprinkler System

by Tom Lanier, Sprinkler Pros

This month we'll look at the proper terminologies for those doo-hickies in your sprinkler system.

I've had a good chuckle over the years listening to people's jargon for the various parts of their landscape irrigation system. Don't get me wrong. I'm not laughing at folks, I'm just laughing. It's understandably and justifiably not peoples' priority in life to have all these parts named correctly since they don't interact with them on a daily basis as I do, but it does help you and I communicate appropriately when we are discussing your needs. For example, I've heard folks refer to valves instead of calling them sprinkler heads and visa versa. In these lessons we'll be going over what is a controller, rotor, nozzle, impact, adjustable emitter, shrub body, etc. and why you should know them. I'll be calling on the spirit of Samuel Clemens (aka Mark Twain) to assist me in attempting to make this entertaining while you go get your scissors to clip this out for your landscape folder or maybe clip this out just to improve this periodical.

**Lesson One: The Water Meter.** The water is supplied to your property through a meter box at your property line. The water district's responsibility stops at (and includes) the meter shutoff on your side of the meter. You should purchase a meter key at one of the local irrigation supplies or the home center/hardware stores to turn off your shutoff valve in the event of a water emergency on your property. They cost about \$10. Otherwise some day the

neighbors may think you are attempting to re-create Old Faithful to one-up them on their front yard water feature. A meter key is a long T-shaped tool that is much easier to use than attempting to use a pair of pliers in that black widow infested box. Side note: don't fear the widow that is lurking there. Just remove the lid; find it; kill it; shut off the water.

"Laws are spider webs through which the big flies pass and the little ones get caught," Honore de Balzac (1799 - 1850)

Open your meter box periodically throughout the year to be sure that it is clear for the meter reader. Most meter boxes I've opened in the last 22 years have been partially or completely full of dirt that the gophers have pushed in and have thus covered the meter. It's your guess how the meter's been getting read each month. X-ray glasses? Here's a great idea. Check your meter. If it's covered with dirt or the meter is otherwise unreadable, look on your water bill for the next reading date and peak out your window that day to watch for the reader. If he doesn't resolve the problem to properly read the meter, call 'Granny' Clampett. She'll know how to cook his kettle.

As Mark Twain said, "Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please."

Check back again for installment number two of Anatomy 101: Sprinkler Systems.

For sprinkler system or landscape help or you need yard care, call my cell at