

## **DRIP IRRIGATION – THE COMPLETE TRAINING PACKAGE**

*Frank Nocera, National Landscape Manager, Netafim Australia, SA,  
[fnocera@netafim.com.au](mailto:fnocera@netafim.com.au)*

Growing changes to our local irrigation market has challenged traditional methods of irrigation and has seen increased interest in Drip Irrigation for the commercial and domestic landscape market.

Information related to drip in most certificate courses is usually represented in two paragraphs; one offering a basic explanation of how the dripper is inserted into poly pipe and the other mentioning that a filter and pressure reducer may be required.

Our challenge is to fill in the missing pieces and present a complete drip training package by conducting training courses with all the information required to successfully select, design and install a drip irrigation system.

We provide training to a large cross section of people within our industry:

- ◆ Dealers/Distributors
- ◆ Irrigation installers
- ◆ Landscapers
- ◆ Gardeners
- ◆ Irrigation and Horticultural students
- ◆ Home owners/End users

The aim of our training courses is to increase the overall level of awareness of drip irrigation in both its concept and utilisation. Higher levels of understanding improve the participants' ability to correctly select and install all necessary drip components.

What information is presented in Netafim's Landscape training courses?

Discovery of Drip Irrigation; benefit of low volume/low pressure irrigation.

- ◆ Low application rates
- ◆ Reduced water run off
- ◆ Elimination of misting & overspray
- ◆ Application of water from below surface (sub mulch or sub turf)
- ◆ Reduced run off and pooling

Development of Drip Emitters:

- ◆ How do drippers work
- ◆ 40 years of R&D that have lead to significant increased reliability, efficiency etc
- ◆ Special features (Inlet filters & TurboNet flow path)
- ◆ Recent innovations (Anti Siphon & Non Leakage devices etc)
- ◆ Explanation of different drip varieties and where they are used

Drip-line Selection based on:

- ◆ Soil type (Light or Heavy Soil)
- ◆ Topography (Flat or sloping ground)
- ◆ Water quality (Mains, bore or treated waste water/water re-use)
- ◆ Based Non PC for flat ground

- ◆ PC for sloping ground
- ◆ AS for sub-surface
- ◆ Suitability to the site

#### Drip-line Accessories:

- ◆ Additional components required for successful operation of drip system (Filters, PRV, Air Release Valves, Flush Valves, Start Connectors, Stakes, Indicator flags, etc)
- ◆ What part they play the drip system and where they fit into the drip system

#### Design Principles:

- ◆ How soil type, topography and water (pressure, flow and quality) can influence design
- ◆ Maximum run lengths for drip-line and sub-mains
- ◆ Correct pipe sizing
- ◆ Formulas to determine application rate, total system flow rate, total tube amounts etc

#### Drip System Installation Principles:

- ◆ Grid layout – direction of drip-lines
- ◆ Spacing between drip-lines
- ◆ Set back distances
- ◆ Use of Stakes
- ◆ Depth of burial
- ◆ Flushing of system
- ◆ Pressure checks etc

#### Drip System Maintenance:

- ◆ Visual check of drip system
- ◆ Removal and cleaning of filters and valves
- ◆ Compare system flow rate etc

#### Drip Operation Guide:

- ◆ Calculate application rate of the drip system
- ◆ Calculate the garden/plant water requirement
- ◆ Calculate drip system duration time

#### Assesment:

- ◆ Written Assessment for one day course
- ◆ Verbal questions for evening courses
- ◆ Allows us to gauge if participants understand course content
- ◆ Indicates if course content is delivered in a clear and concise manner

#### Conclusion: What are the benefits to Netafim to provide training courses?

- ◆ Increased awareness of the entire Netafim Landscape range of products
- ◆ Increased product confidence
- ◆ Increased product usage
- ◆ Increased skills to select and install drip products
- ◆ Increased customer satisfaction