Irrigation Consumer Bill of Rights (ICBR)

IA Show 2019
Dr. Charles Burt
Chairman of ITRC
Cal Poly
San Luis Obispo, California
What is the ICBR?

• Program for Farmer, Dealer, Manufacturers

• Consists of Questions for Dealers to discuss with Growers.
Why is the ICBR Needed

• Low Margins
  – Tough to give good backup service
• No Standards for Dealer Performance
• Poorly Installed Products
• Confusion for Growers on Bids
  – 3 Dealers with different cost, DU, pipe, warranties, and flow rates
The Basic Situation

- Dealers -- Good ones can’t compete
- Growers -- Don’t know questions, much less the answers
- Manufacturers -- suffer
The Irrigation “Consumer”

- Often a huge emphasis on the Initial Price.
- Reliance on personality of salesperson.
- Does not know options.
- May have little concept of annual costs.
- Does not know the details of design and product selection.
The ICBR attempts to guide the parties towards:

1. The purchase of a **SYSTEM** rather than an **ASSORTMENT** of **PIECES**.

2. Thinking of the irrigation system as a tool to **INCREASE PROFITS** rather than only as an **INITIAL** expense.

3. Understanding that there are costs and minimum hardware requirements associated with high quality.
Bottom line –

ICBR is a tool for good irrigation dealers who want satisfied customers, and who want an impartial comparison against “bottom feeders”.
Some History

• The first ICBR was developed by Cal Poly ITRC over 20 years ago with support from the California Energy Commission

• It was adopted by
  – The Irrigation Association
  – The California Agricultural Irrigation Dealers
Some History

• Only a few dealers have used it.
• It has not been promoted by the IA.
• Some dealers provide written answers to the questions as a sales tool.
Some History

Initially, some of the major California irrigation dealers were concerned that if farmers had the list of questions, the dealers might be open to lawsuits……..

My response was: A good understanding helps with developing good customers and less arguments.
Some History

Originally there were 2 Bills:

- “General”
- Drip/Micro
The Irrigation Consumer Bill of Rights has been updated and now has 3 “Bills”

- General
- Drip/Micro
- Soil and Plant Moisture Monitoring Systems
Why the 3rd bill?

Soil and Plant Moisture Monitoring Systems

Answer:
Look at how many exhibitors have products or services in this category.
The IA could take an active role in promoting an ICBR program.

- Inexpensive
- Good PR
- Builds on professionalism
Please refer to the handout, which includes all 3 bills.