

The Evolution of UV Controls

Modern controls make systems easier to use and simpler to service

By Myron Lupal

As the market for ultraviolet (UV) disinfection systems continues to grow, so does the need for more modern, user-friendly controls. UV systems have come a long way from early versions, which had control features that included a lamp-out circuit and an audible alarm. Modern UV systems include system architecture and displays that are reminiscent of the iPod. Most advances for residential UV systems have come in the form of system controllers instead of reactor designs or lamp technology.

As customers become more knowledgeable about UV technology and its applications, the following features top the list when looking for a “best-in-class” UV system.

System Set-Up

Customers prefer a robust enclosure that is water-resistant, easy to mount and aesthetically pleasing.

A full-color display screen, similar to a cell phone or iPod, allows for quick and easy access to all system functions. These functions include a full diagnostic start-up sequence or

visual and audible warnings for condition-specific failures, remaining lamp life and UV intensity.

Upgrades & Updates

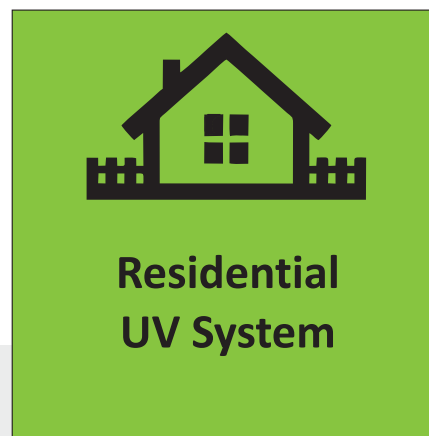
The ability to upgrade a system’s software, if required, allows the user to have the most current technology without having to return the controller.

Customers prefer the ability to add features easily if needed. These may include solenoid valves, 4-20 mA signals, remote alarms, remote-on capability or even Ethernet connections that allow the system to be connected to the Internet for global monitoring capabilities. To do this, the system would include a communications port by which all of these modules could connect to the main controller.

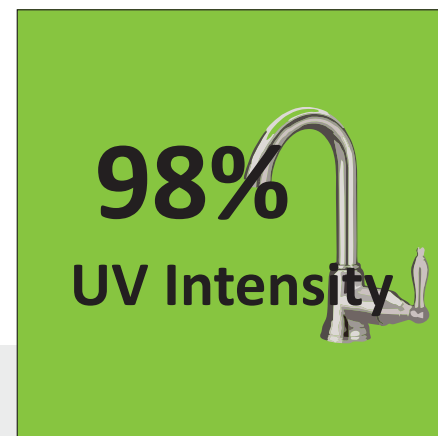
Easy Communication

The ability to flash-program the controller into multiple languages is a definite advantage to the global consumer, not to mention the added flexibility for the distributor who happens to sell their product to various markets.

Figure 1. Sample Customer-Friendly UV Control Screens



Home screen



UV intensity screen



Lamp expiration screen



Unsafe water screen

Simpler Service

An aid for the consumer to find a replacement UV lamp for the system by utilizing a controller that directs the user back to a dealer's website, or perhaps displays a phone number, as opposed to searching for a user manual or searching online, would benefit the customer and the dealer alike. Imagine if this was made even simpler by incorporating a QR code onto a controller's color screen that links the user, via a Web-enabled camera phone, directly to a Web page that allows him to purchase a replacement lamp or perhaps watch a video on changing the lamp or cleaning the quartz sleeve.

Modern Controls

Today's UV controller is a technological leap over what was developed merely a few years ago. By incorporating a user-friendly, intuitive color interface, homeowners now have the ability to monitor and service their UV systems like never before. Steve Jobs may be the one to thank for the evolution of the modern UV controller, or it may simply be modern technological

evolution. No matter the reason, the result is that modern controllers allow customers to get what they are looking for in a UV system. *wqp*

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