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Keep Water Features Working

SMART CHOICES IN PUMPS AND FILTRATION

BY ATLANTIC OASE

Water features should be the focal point of the spaces they occupy on your campus, but maintaining them should not occupy an inordinate amount of staff time or labor. While nothing is maintenance free, well-designed pump and filtration systems can make the difference between a working, beautiful fountain or waterfall and an unsightly, dried-up hole.

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Pumps and filters must first and foremost deliver the performance required over the long haul, and products with a proven track record are a must. They must be both reliable and predictable, with well-defined requirements for upkeep and scheduled replacement of consumables. Sustainability is also a concern: excessive, inordinate use of water or power will not be overlooked for long. Finally, the equipment chosen has to be affordable, both to purchase initially and more importantly, to operate. Hidden or exorbitant operating costs have been the demise of many a beautiful feature.

Water features can be grouped into two categories, each of which uses different types of equipment. Ponds, streams and falls require pumps that deliver high volumes of water at low pressure. It actually costs far less to deliver high volume than to create high pressure, so high volume/low pressure pumps keep operating costs per unit volume as low as possible. “Pond pumps” also need to be able to pick up solid wastes without clogging and deliver them to filtration systems for easy removal of organics and nutrients, which will control algae and submerged vegetation.

The global leader in water feature equipment, Oase, has been delivering water wherever needed since 1949. Oase’s AquaMax pond pumps are specifically designed to provide high flows at a very low cost of operation and to deliver organic wastes to sophisticated, automated filtration systems. The top of the line, AquaMax Eco Expert 220-volt brushless DC pumps, have advanced features that greatly enhance performance while minimizing upkeep. The larger units are both powerful and efficient, capable of moving 11,000 gallons per hour for 700 watts; these also have built-in variable speed control to adjust output and reduce electrical consumption.

All are truly “smart” pumps. Environmental Function Control senses water level and shuts the pumps down before overflowing can cause damage. Seasonal Flow Control automatically senses temperature and lowers both flow and power draw as weather gets colder and the need for circulation decreases. They are also frost-protected down to -4°F, avoiding costly damage if they are not winterized.

Fountains, on the other hand, require pumps that deliver high pressure rather than high volume. High pressure is required to force water through the small orifices of fountain heads and will typically require more power than a high-volume pump. These pumps have small-screened prefilters on their intakes to avoid picking up debris that might clog fountain nozzles.

Just as the AquaMax line is designed for ponds, Oase Aquarius pumps are custom built for fountain use. Boasting similar output and laudable efficiency, they are equipped with a Dynamic Function Control switch that varies the flow

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instantaneously to create dancing water effects—Bellagio on a button. They too feature Environmental Function Control to shut them off if water level drops and feature frost protection down to -4°F .

Oase filtration products are similarly full featured, offering guaranteed water quality and a choice of semi- and fully automatic models. At the most advanced level, ProfiClear filtration operates fully autonomously, removing suspended solids down to 60 microns, converting toxins in the water to harmless compounds, documenting cleaning cycles and monitoring temperature. If desired, these filters can even generate reports and deliver them to the appropriate maintenance facility.

Perhaps the most useful feature for those responsible for maintaining water features is the Oase Control system. Pumps and other equipment such as filters and lights can be cabled together and controlled remotely via a Wi-Fi application, on site or off. In addition to the full range of pump controls, including a choice of patterns for fountain displays, Oase Control also interfaces with filters and lights. Oase ProfiClear filtration can be set up to be fully automatic—with no input needed from an operator—using sensors that directly gauge when the filter needs cleaning or backwashing, by time interval or by manual intervention.

For displays that last into the evening, Oase ProfiClear Lighting offers control of fully submersible RGB LED lights, with each light individually programmable. Color, intensity, color-changing patterns, and periods of operation can be set for each light or create groups of lights that all work together simultaneously without any specialized equipment or interface other than a smartphone or tablet.

Creating a water feature that remains as beautiful and dependable as the day it was installed comes down to smart choices in equipment and control. When pumps, filters, and lighting are engineered for efficiency, durability, and ease of use, maintenance shifts from a constant challenge to a

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manageable, predictable routine. Thoughtful design paired with proven technology not only protects the investment made in a pond, stream, or fountain, it ensures that the feature continues to perform flawlessly, season after season.

With the right tools behind the scenes, water features can do what they were meant to do: provide focal points of movement, sound, and life, without demanding more care than they give back in enjoyment.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Atlantic-Oase is a global leader in water features, uniting the innovation of Oase and Atlantic Water Gardens. We design and deliver world-class fountains, pumps, filtration, and hardscape solutions—backed by unmatched quality, service, and support worldwide.

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