

**SUPERMARKETS GENERAL CORPORATION**  
**Inter-Office Memorandum**

AUG 27 1981

TO AL ALTER  
FROM RASHID MADRASWALA

DATE AUGUST 25, 1981  
SUBJECT LABOR SAVINGS USING  
A WATER-BOY.  
19 N.Y. STORES

I. RESULT OF STUDY

When provided with a Water-Boy, the smallest Horticulture Department (from among the 19 stores) would save about 3 hours per week and the largest Horticulture Department (from among the 19 stores) would save about 5 1/2 hours per week.

II. DESCRIPTION OF A WATER-BOY

The Water-Boy is a 30 gallon drum placed on a dolly and covered with a butcher block type top. A coiled hose (about 12 feet long) is attached to the drum on one end and has a 2 feet long spray nozzle attachment on the other end. A trigger on the spray nozzle attachment controls the volume of water from a trickle to a fast spray. The Water-Boy is filled up by just hooking it up to a faucet. It can be left unattended while filling up. When it is full, it will automatically stop the intake of water. The Water-Boy can be operated by plugging it into any electrical outlet in the Horticulture Department.

III. DETAILS OF THE STUDY

1. A request for the purchase of Water-Boys for the Horticulture Depts. of 19 New York stores was made to the SE Committee on July 30, 1981. From among these 19 stores the smallest Horticulture Department has about 75 large plants hanging on a rack overhead and on the shelves about 20 trays each containing 30 small plants. The largest Horticulture Department has about 130 large hanging plants and 35 trays of small plants. These numbers are approximates and only for this month (8/81). The number of plants in a Horticulture Department changes with the time of the year.
2. The watering of plants without the use of a Water-Boy is as follows:
  - A) Fill a couple of pitchers with water, put them on a work table and bring the work table to the Horticulture Department.
  - B) Step on a step-stool (most probably a milk crate) with a watering pitcher in hand and start watering the hanging plants.
  - C) Take a plant off the rack, bring it down, water it and put it back. Do the same for other plants within reach.

- D) Step down from the step-stool, move it to another position and continue watering more plants.
  - E) When the watering pitcher is empty go to the work table, fill up the pitcher and continue watering the hanging plants.
  - F) When all the hanging plants have been watered, start watering the plants in the small trays. Some trays must be pulled out to water the plants in the rear of the tray.
3. The watering of plants using a Water-Boy is as follows:
- A) Fill up the Water-Boy and bring it to the Horticulture Department.
  - B) Plug it in an electrical outlet. Press the trigger on the spray nozzle attachment and water the hanging plants while standing on the floor. (No need to step on a step stool).
  - C) Water about 12 to 15 plants. Move the Water-Boy to another position and continue watering the hanging plants.
  - D) When all the hanging plants have been watered start watering the plants in the small trays.

4. The savings in time with the use of a Water-Boy are as follows:

	WITHOUT WATER-BOY -----	WITH WATER-BOY -----	TIME SAVED -----
Hanging Plant	0.57 Mins.	0.20 Mins.	0.37 Mins.
Tray of 30 small plants	2.94 Mins.	1.98 Mins.	0.96 Mins.

The smallest Horticulture Department with 75 hanging plants and 20 trays of small plants would save 3.13 hours/week if all plants are watered 4 times per week. The largest Horticulture Department with 135 hanging plants and 35 trays of small plants would save 5.45 hrs/week if all plants are watered 4 times per week. Assuming a labor rate of \$8/hour the smallest and the largest Horticulture Departments would save \$1500/Year and \$2270/Year respectively.

The Water-Boy now costs \$850. Parts, maintenance and labor are free and guaranteed for two years. It is possible that when this unit is bought in large quantities, the cost could be lower than \$850.