

the system can be controlled remotely. And, if you have cameras set up at home, you can monitor this visually on your laptop or phone.

What advances in smart home technology can we expect to see in the next 20 years?

It is moving really quickly and within only the next 10 years you'll have access to 3D technology — to the hologram. This technology is already out there but isn't in the commercial market yet as it's extremely expensive.

We'll be able to use this technology to control the home through a screen or device that will give you a 3D view of your home. You'll then be able to touch, for example, a light, a door, or the AC within the hologram and it will change it within your home.

Technology is moving so fast that I think within 10 years everyone will have some sort of smart home aspect to their homes.

You have worked with developers on residential projects including Jumeirah Village and Jumeirah Lakes. How does this differ to working with an individual homeowner?

Usually, developers for a tower or a cluster of different apartments want smart home systems in the living room and the master bedroom; they rarely go for the full blown system or full luxury as they care more about the energy savings and having that little bit of luxury in the living room to show off to guests.

The developer or owner of a villa or a penthouse, however, will want the fully integrated system where almost everything is electronically controlled by our systems.

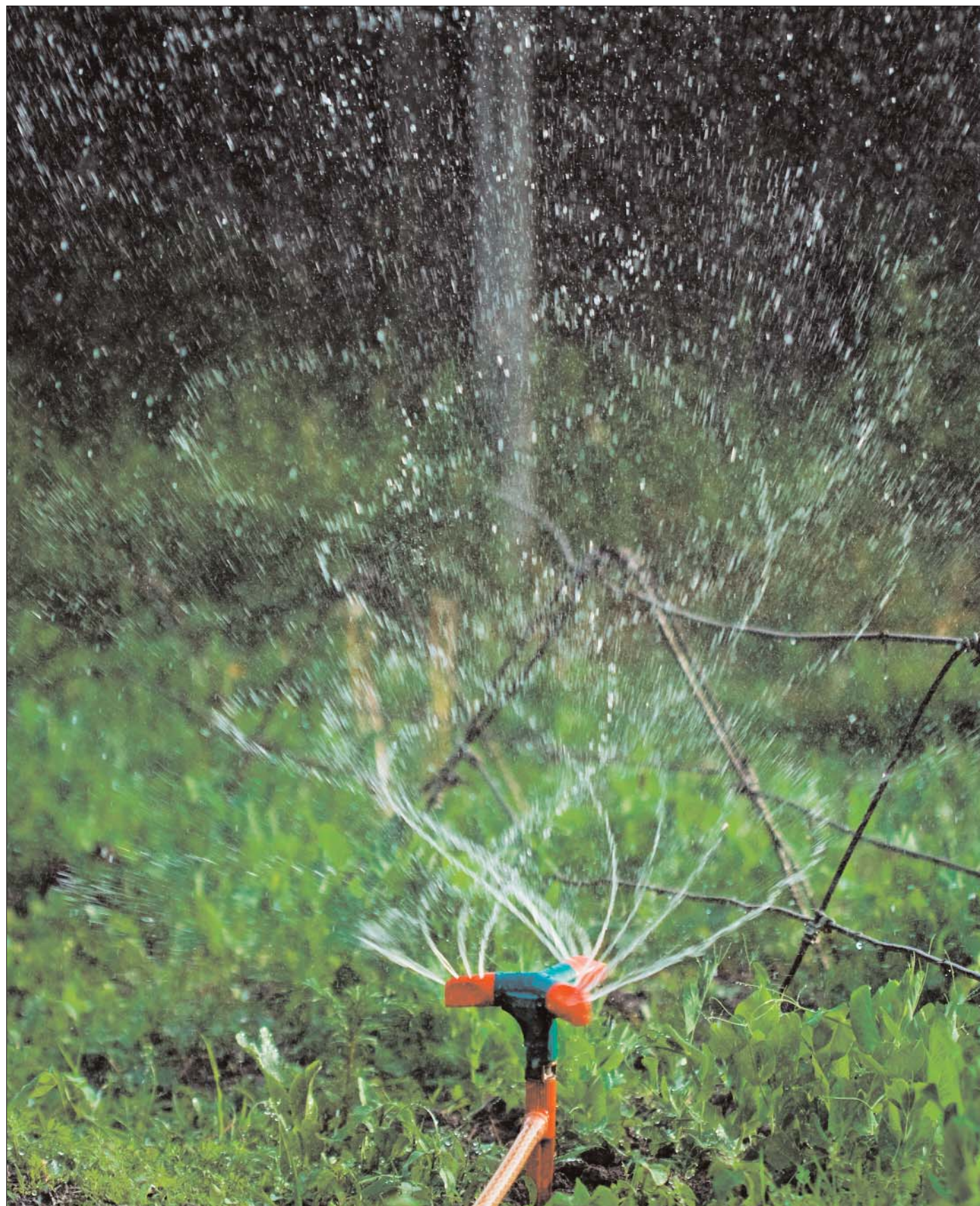
Why is there a growing trend for developers to build 'smart homes'?

It is a big selling point. For example, when you have a tower that has eight penthouses that sell just because of the automation, each one sells for about 400 per cent higher than the initial suggested selling price.

This makes the developer enough profit so that if they don't sell the rest of the apartments, they don't care. Smart home technology is very attractive to developers because everybody wants to mimic the rich and famous and, although some developers may not choose the full luxury option, they will make more practical aspects of the system available.

You have worked with hotel chains including the Grand Hyatt, Hilton and Shangri-La, as well as offices across Dubai. How is the commercial sector using smart home technology?

Offices are a little different because you have less usage time — from just 9am to 5pm — and the needs inside the office are different to that inside the home. In the home you cater to adults, children, the elderly and maids who perhaps don't read English, so you have to cater to a mass of



■ Smarthome sprinklers are also based on the fully-integrated system and can perform according to requirement. Product pictures are for illustrative purpose only

options, the system has to be very elegant, and you have to match the system to the interior design of the home.

In the office, however, you care about the lights, you care about security and safety, and you care about the AC. The needs of hotels are similar to the home.

A hotel guest will come to relax and will not consider saving energy, so the system has to be automated to ensure maximum control of energy efficiency. When you check into a hotel the system

will recognise this and switch on your AC prior to you reaching your room.

With the automated taxi caller, when you leave your room a taxi will be waiting for you upon your arrival in the lobby.

Overall, how does the smart home technology market in Dubai compare to the rest of the world?

Most of the rich and famous have their eyes on Dubai — first and foremost because of the construction — and they sim-

ply want the best of the best. Smarthome operates in three regions — the US, Europe and Asia/Africa, which covers the Middle East.

We are responsible for more sales here than in the US and Europe collectively multiplied by four, and 90 per cent of what we do here is just in Dubai. This gives you an indication of the size and importance of the Dubai market.

As told to Carli Smithers, Freelance Writer