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**Barnesville resident gives storm drains a bit of flair** by *Scott Maucione, Staff Writer*



Stormwater drains are collectors of everything from plastic bags to discarded furniture, and when it rains that trash is washed into the watershed.

Of the more than 100,000 pounds of trash that ends up in the Anacostia River, 75 to 90 percent comes from stormwater drainage, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council.

But salvation may have come. Barnesville resident Amy Rogers bought the rights to The Deflector three years ago and, true to its superhero-like name, it has become the ultimate stormwater drain protector.

Stormwater drains can be headaches for cities and shopping centers. Trash builds up inside these drains and causes flooding. Chemical runoff flows into them and contaminates the water, according to The Deflector's inventor Bill Mossburg.

The Deflector is an aluminum grate that is custom fit for a stormwater drain with small holes to let the water flow through.

The grate catches the trash and city maintenance can pick it up during routine street cleanings. Roger's company, Amy's Contracting, has a program in place to pick up the trash for customers "It's so simple it's stupid. I thank God everyday for putting the idea in my head," said Mossburg.

Mossburg invented The Deflector in 2000 after working for years on storm drains. Rogers, a former financial planner, was looking for something to market with her company, and discovered the invention on the Internet. She contacted Mossburg, who agreed to let her market it.

There are some less simple parts to the invention, however. The grate's holes can be custom made to any size, and supplemental chemical sponges can be added. The sponges are attached to the inside of the grate at the bottom and soak up chemicals as they flow through, according to Rogers.

So far, The Deflector has had a warm welcome. It is already in five states and Washington, D.C. Fort Detrick in Frederick has also approved it as part of the Net Zero program, a military pollution initiative. The product sells for about \$1,000 per drain. The aluminum does not rust and the product is replacable if damaged.

Cassie Triplett, a property manager for The Rappaport Cos., has 84 Deflectors installed in a number of the shopping centers she manages in Virginia and Maryland. "It would be great if more people used it ... it really is a great product ... there is no trash in [our] stormwater pond," she said.

Others have been impressed by The Deflector as well. According to Mossburg, one of their clients has had so much success that their previously polluted wet pond for stormwater drainage is now used as a home for catfish.

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