
Longview Economic Development Corporation

410 North Center Street,

Longview TX, 75601

Tel:903-753-7878 | Fax:903-753-3646

Email:info@longviewusa.com

Longview Company Hopes Foam Product That Douses Fires Will Also Ignite Profits

By Master site admin

Published: 07/31/2005 - 1:06pm

Keith Parker is eager to demonstrate his nontoxic, foam-based fire extinguisher, even if it means setting his warehouse, or himself, on fire.

"That's 2,500 degrees" he said proudly, dousing his hand with foam then holding it inches from a propane torch.

A blazing Christmas tree fire was quickly reduced to dripping, foamy embers during another display. It's proof, Parker says, his new hand-held extinguisher will save lives and property.

"We're not there to replace the fire department," said Parker, chief executive officer of Summit Environmental in Longview. "This is a tool that in an emergency you can keep it from getting out of hand."

After selling thousands of bottles on the QVC shopping network, Summit Environmental is distributing 175,000 cans of FlameOut to Big 5 Sporting Goods Stores nationwide. Parker said the product will be available to Longview residents in September when Target Stores and CVS Pharmacy add the product to their shelves.

Dr. Mohson Amiran developed the FlameOut chemical in 1997, and Parker quickly bought up the rights for \$2.3 million. After selling thousands of bottles of Firepower 911 (same product, different package) on QVC and in catalogues, FlameOut moved into retail stores this month.

Parker, 56, says the extinguisher will “revolutionize” how people fight fires in their homes. The chemical is compressed in an aerosol can and foams immediately.

“If you can use a can of hair spray or a can of air freshener, you can put out a spot fire” while camping, cooking or in your car, he said.

The foam suffocates, cools and prevents reignition of a fire, Parker said. It also has flame retardant properties and is being developed as a foam wall against wildfires – a 100-foot wide, 25,000-foot long strip of trees sprayed with foam from a 747 would become almost impossible to burn, cutting the fire off from more fuel. It is being used in fire departments as well as in refineries in India and as a coolant at a nuclear power facility in Taiwan.

According to Parker, after the 1992 Geneva Convention banned Halon, a widely-used, highly-toxic fire extinguishing agent, many companies scrambled to develop a replacement. FlameOut,

he said, was one of the first replacement products approved by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"There were a lot of companies trying to copy what we were doing. They don't have the chemical technology," Parker said. FlameOut is made up of three basic parts, and only Parker and Amiran know the key formula. "This product is very well-guarded."

Parker formed Summit Environmental in 1997. It was approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1998 and is traded as a NASDAQ bulletin board stock.

Summit, at 133 E. Tyler St., was classified in 2004 as a research and development company but has been reclassified for marketing.

"We should do 1 million to 1.5 million in (can) sales this year" Parker said, "which is just the tip of the iceberg."

Summit is one of two local companies that specialize in firefighting foam. U.S. Foam, which located in Longview several years ago, make firefighting foam and foam and foam used to clean up chemical spills and other hazardous materials.

FlameOut boasts a slew of certifications – it's been approved by several agencies including the

U.S. Forest Service and the National Fire Protection Association and has a perfect rating under the Hazardous Materials Identification System.

"It's a totally nontoxic product. We spent seven years getting all these certifications," Parker said. "We're the only people able to get a product through the standards."

The FlameOut chemical is produced by Amiran at Biogenesis Laboratories in Wisconsin. From there it goes to a bottling plant in Ohio.

Parker, a Longview native, said he'd like to relocate the manufacturing to Longview, but the expense would be too great.

FlameOut has a shelf-life of three years and is designed to be used once. It sprays for a minute and 10 seconds, Parker said, four times as long as an average, full-size extinguisher.