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TELEGRAM & GAZETTE ■ WORCESTER, MASS.

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Firms urged to manage pollution

By Martin Luttrell
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

Coalition workshops target storm-water runoff

WORCESTER—Scott Rossiter recalls a day, years ago, when he and his two young sons joined other volunteers in pulling debris from the Blackstone River, and noting that after hours of effort, the river banks were still littered with bits of Styrofoam too numerous to clean up.

That caused him to stop using foam packing peanuts at Lampin Corp. in Uxbridge, where he is president, and to consider how individual decisions can have an effect on the river.

It also caused him to rethink how the metal machine parts company, situated

on River Road, about a quarter of a mile from the Blackstone, could handle its storm-water runoff, which had been channeled directly into a tributary brook.

After learning from Blackstone River Coalition Director Donna Williams that the brook would take oil, gasoline and debris into the river, he diverted the runoff so that it ran through some stones, shrubs and landscaping, which filter contaminants out before they reached the waterway, he said.

Now, the Blackstone River Coalition

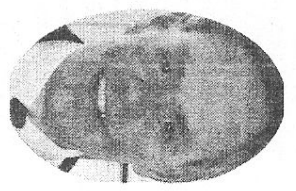
is trying to get other businesses in the Blackstone River watershed to take similar measures to manage storm water, and is holding a series of informational workshops as part of a program titled, "In Business for the Blackstone."

Program coordinator Dona Neely said that polluted runoff from roofs, parking lots and roadways has been identified as the most significant cause of water-quality problems in the river and its tributaries today.

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“Our employees live in the area and know it’s just a good thing to do.”

SCOTT ROSSITER
LAMPIN CORP. PRESIDENT



Blackstone coalition

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She said the program would help minimize the pollution entering the watershed through storm-water runoff.

The coalition will have guest speakers demonstrate how small changes by businesses to their daily routines can further the organization’s goal of making the river “swimmable and fishable” by 2015.

The first free workshop will be held from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. tomorrow at Norton Hall at Saint-Gobain, 1 New Bond St., Worcester.

“I learned a long time ago that seemingly innocuous things we do have an effect on the river, multiplied by number of people doing it,” Mr. Rossiter said. “It can be harmful to the river. I think this program’s a great idea.

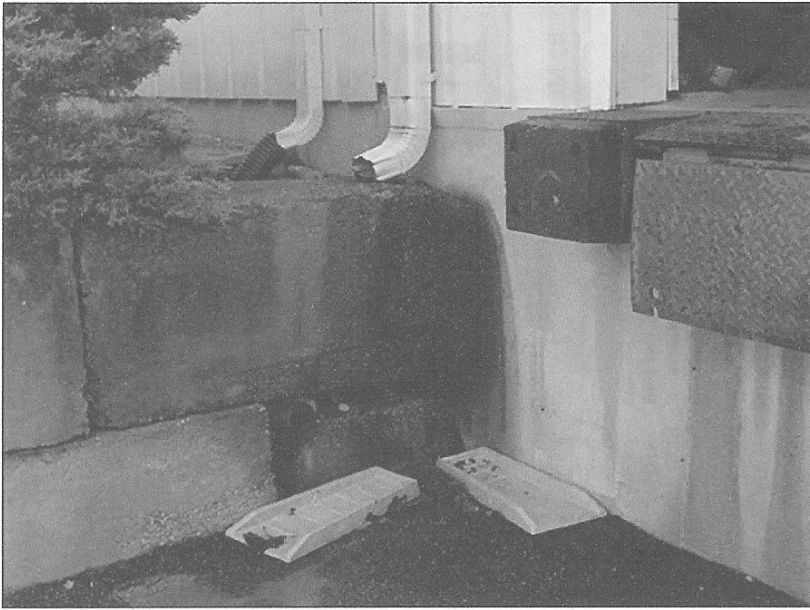
“When you see visible signs that people care, it validates your efforts. For less than \$100, I diverted the runoff into landscaping. It’s one of the simple things you can do to make it fishable and swimmable,” he said. “I know firsthand the value of the river. Lampin is an employee-owned company. We all live in the Valley. We’re all aware of the benefits of having a clean river.

“We think it’s a neat thing on a corporate level, but our employees live in the area and know it’s just a good thing to do,” Mr. Rossiter said.

Other workshops will be held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Oct. 24 at Tri-River Health Center, 281 East Hartford Ave., Uxbridge; 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Oct. 25 at Brigham Hill Community Farm, 37 Wheeler Road, North Grafton; and 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 2 at the Cumberland Library, 1464 Diamond Hill Road, Cumberland, R.I.

All sessions are free, and open to interested businesses. For more information, go to www.zaptheblackstone.org.

Contact business reporter Martin Luttrell by e-mail at mluttrell@telegram.com.



With a small modification of a gutter spout and an expense of less than \$100, Lampin Corporation will prevent more than 73,000 gallons of stormwater runoff per year.

