

## Looking to clean up in the toilet industry

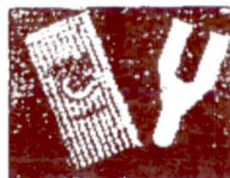
By Chris Flacus  
Staff writer

Queasy about touching a toilet? A Phoenix company has the answer. It's Toyla Tab, "the sanitary toilet-seat lifter."

The Y-shape piece of plastic mounts with adhesive backing under the toilet seat, with a handle sticking out a few inches.

"It allows people to touch a more sanitary surface than the toilet seat," said James Steward, director of sales for Desert Sand Products Inc., which makes the device. There's no more juggling act to lift the seat with your foot.

A couple of Walgreen drugstores in the Valley are selling the product for \$3.99 each. And the city of Phoenix is considering putting Toyla Tab in places like Sky Harbor



Toyla Tab allows people to avoid touching a toilet seat.

— See TOYLA TABS, page B6

## 'Toyla Tab' may nab a spot in your john

— TOYLA TABS, from page B1

International Airport.

Steward envisions a Valley full of Toyla Tabs, from portable toilets — "there are thousands of them" — to airplanes.

The city is a start.

"It's something we're going to look at. It's very innovative," said Tony Hatcher, a procurement manager for Phoenix.

The city probably would start with a few test sites.

"We're looking at the airport," he said. "You have people going in and out of there constantly."

John Spearman is already a fan.

"I think the Toyla Tab is a great product," said Spearman, assistant director for the Arizona Department of Corrections.

He has worked with Steward and Charles Sims, who invented the device several years ago, for more than a year. They may use inmate labor to make the Toyla Tabs.

Inmates already work as telemarketers and make things from bicycle parts to novelty items through the Prison Industry Enhancement Programs.

Steward and Sims would get manufacturing space in the prison — and a built-in labor pool.

"We provide the opportunity for them to have a labor pool with fixed pay," Spearman said.

For the prison, it's a way to keep prisoners busy.

Spearman said the Toyla Tab operation could create work for about 30 inmates.

While Phoenix is familiarizing itself with the product, the city already knows Steward.

The city sued him in 1994 for unpaid sales taxes when he was doing business as Steward Food Service Inc. The city's law department said the matter has not been resolved.

Steward agreed, but said, "This is Charles Sims' company. That's a totally different thing."

Steward did receive an award in 1991 honoring minority entrepreneurs throughout the state as part of National Minority Enterprise Development Week.

And Toyla Tab works. Just ask him.

He showed off a model at the company's headquarters on Washington Street.

"Economical, decorative, practical," boasts the package. "To apply, it's as easy as . . . 1-2-3!"

The real testimonial was in the bathroom of the headquarters. The Toyla Tab was in place, ready for action.

Steward has 210,000 more of them on hand.

"It's a great product," he said. "The first thing people say when they see it is, 'Where do we get one!'"

*[Handwritten scribble]*

TOTAL P.03

07-08/1906 09:44 FROM

TO

12024889123 P.03