

## CINCINNATI ENTREPRENEUR INNOVATES FOR FISHERS WITH SALAMANDER SINKERS

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Avid Cincinnati fisherman Johnny Stone has built a young, but growing company around a practical product designed to make fishing more enjoyable, save resources and create less environmental impact.

Losing sinkers and catching them on rocks is a common fishing problem that can waste a fisherman's time and money. Stone, who also has a background in science and IT, has designed and developed sinkers that are snag resistant, weight adjustable and made from stainless steel. His company Salamander Sinkers sells six models, including for Carolina Rig and drop shot fishing, that can be used in differing water depths and speeds.

"I looked at it from a physics point of view," Stone explained. "Most sinkers are made of high-density metal that are small in size. Those metals are great for casting, but when they are cast in rocks you tend to lose them. (Salamander Sinkers) slide across the rocks without snagging."

The steel rods used for submersion are enclosed in a plastic tube along with a steel cable. The cable runs the length of the tube and has swivels attached at each end for easy connection to the fishing line. The plastic tube design gives the sinkers their snag resistant quality. The sinker's weight can be adjusted by removing one of the steel rods from the tube, allowing anglers to use their sinker in various fishing environments.

"I tried several different prototypes until I found one that works," said Stone.

The lead found in most sinkers still being used today is also harmful to the environment, leading some states in the U.S. to ban the use or sale of lead sinkers under an ounce. That's not an issue with Stone's stainless steel sinkers.

Currently, Salamander Sinkers is home-based and Stone works with contractors to manufacture and distribute them. He sells them through his website, as well as through several retailers in California, Ohio and New York state. Stone has been working with TechSolve to help him better market his company. He's also currently working on expanding into international markets, including Canada, where lead sinkers are banned in national parks and wildlife areas. He's also considering making larger sinkers that could better serve the pacific coast market.

"On a trip to California at a sports show I talked to several fisherman and bait shop owners who looked at my product and said they need it in a larger size. Right now our largest is one ounce, and if we could make it one pound we could enter the salt water market for fisherman on the Pacific coast," he said.

Author/From the desk of Feoshia Henderson