WATER CONSERVATION Invention could end toilet-seat turmoil between spouses

[22](http://www.lfpress.com/2014/08/05/invention-could-end-toilet-seat-turmoil-between-spouses#disqus_thread) **Innovative urinal draws stream of praise, interest.**

 By [Jonathan Sher](http://www.lfpress.com/author/jonathan-sher), The London Free Press Tuesday, August 5, 2014 9:20:39 EDT PM

It began as a mission to help housewives who wanted a

respectable men’s urinal for their bathroom, but now the waterless urinal created by a 90-year-old Londoner has become a green magic bullet that’s drawing interest from conservationists from Massachusetts to Arizona.

Norm Brooks is no stranger to business success, but the

long-time home builder and developer who created much of Kilworth appears on the verge of leaving a wider mark. At an age when most contemporaries are too frail to work, Brooks has invested more than $100,000 to design, build and manufacture in East London a Concealed Waterless Urinal for homes, that’s the only one to gain the approval of plumbing regulators in Canada and the United States.

His urinal is so promising, that even though he hasn’t marketed it, it’s drawn notice at the University of Arizona and heated debate in a Massachusetts town that considered alternatives to a costly sewer system. “It could become mainstream. I think it’s on the cutting edge,” said Cado Daily, a water resources co-ordinator for a program

established by the University of Arizona.

Commercial urinals are a mainstay and flushless versions dominate in water-needy Arizona, but none passed the

eye test in homes until Brooks created one that folds closed into a wall, Daily said. The innovation is not the first by Brooks, who co-founded the London Home Builders Association in 1952, and may have been the first in London to hire framing subcontractors to make building more efficient. When he retired from construction after 54 years in 2005, he turned his focus to what had been the most frequent requests by housewives “Do you have a men’s urinal for residential”There is nothing except the unsightly large hang-on-the-wall types used in Commercial Buildings. The ladies won’t have those in their homes.

That he was already in his mid-80s didn’t deter Brooks, who credits training as an engineer for his tendency to seek out better ways of doing things. “Men are always peeing all over the floor and leaving the toilet seat up,” he said. “I can do something about that.” Brooks set out to create a urinal that would be certified for **Residences** by those who oversee plumbing codes. His idea was so novel, Canadian authorities wouldn’t test it, so he turned to Americans; the device was later approved for both countries. Between design, manufacturing and testing, Brooks invested more than $100,000, and got back $11,000 in tax refunds from Revenue Canada for “Research and Development”, because the project was classified as “innovative”.

But while housewives were the impetus behind his efforts, environmentalists and engineers have shown their enthusiasm. Derek Satnik, P.Eng. estimated London would save more than one million of gallons of water a day, if half the homes here used these urinals. He said, 11,825 litres of water per family per year could be saved. Environmentalists in Falmouth, Mass. pushed for the town to consider requiring waterless urinals rather than spending $50 million in a sewer system; an effort voters narrowly rejected.

Back in London, Brooks is his own test marketer, installing a urinal in his Seniors apartment, and making tweaks to make it more user-friendly. A floating liquid barrier prevents odors from coming up, while a chemical breaks down the urine salts that might otherwise clog the device. Now, he plans a broad marketing effort he hopes will make his waterless urinal, called the “Resno”, a household name. View the website at [www.resno.ca](http://www.resno.ca)

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Norm Brooks shows how the urinal he invented,

easily fits into a standard home.(Mike Hensen/

The London Free Press)

