

FOR: SulliPlug™
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMPANY HISTORY

Brian J. Sullivan had been a bar owner for six years when he got the flash of inspiration that begat the SulliPlug™ – the revolutionary beer-tap seal that keeps away fruit flies, gnats and other flying pests that have bedeviled bartenders since time immemorial, and cleans taps in the process.

“There’s no question that flies buzzing around a beer tap is an unappetizing sight,” says Sullivan. “But no matter how clean you kept your bar, it seemed you never could get rid of them. We cleaned the taps daily at my own place, yet we continued to have a very visible fruit fly problem – they swarmed around the beer taps in the morning, because there was always just enough beer residue overnight to attract them.

“I wondered why no one had ever come up with a way to get rid of them – when one day in 2001, it suddenly came to me just how to do it,” Sullivan explains.

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COMPANY HISTORY/Add One

At the time, Sullivan owned a bar in Forest Park, IL, a convivial gathering place called Murphy's Pub; today, he owns and/or operates four taverns and restaurant establishments. Sullivan came to the bar business as a natural offshoot of buying residential and commercial buildings, which he'd been doing in the years following his 1987 college graduation. In the mid '90s, he purchased a building with a defunct bar and that's when he decided to create Murphy's Pub.

Growing up as the middle child of six in the Chicago suburb of Oak Park, IL, Sullivan had never fancied himself a tavern keeper, much less an inventor. But he did know that whatever he ended up doing for a living, he would be his own boss. "I always had a strong desire to be self-employed," says Sullivan.

With that in mind, he pursued a self-directed major from Western Illinois University. During his college years, Sullivan got a taste of the bar business through internships with Old Style and Budweiser, but wouldn't purchase his first liquor establishment until 1995. Upon graduation, Sullivan took a shot at his father's profession: selling insurance – and enjoyed a great deal of success.

Still, the insurance industry wasn't entirely fulfilling for the adventurous, creative Sullivan: "I started looking for other things to do in addition to my primary job," he says.

Sullivan gravitated toward the real estate business, buying residential fixer-uppers and turning them into profitable operations. Then came the fateful day in 1995 when Sullivan purchased the Forest Park commercial building that housed an existing tavern. After extensive renovations, Murphy's Pub became Sullivan's foray into the bar business.

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COMPANY HISTORY/Add Two

After Murphy's Pub came a series of bars and restaurants, and even a boat marina (in Silver Lake, Wisconsin). Eventually, in January 2006, Sullivan would form a partnership with Chicago businessman Steve Skrine, founder of the popular up-and-coming restaurant chain SkrineChops, and together they have begun opening more SkrineChops locations in the Chicago area.

Five years earlier, however, when Sullivan was still building his own collection of drinking establishments, he was also doing insurance sales on the side – specifically, liquor liability insurance (the dram shop).

This meant that Sullivan was regularly visiting a great many bars in his role as insurance agent, and he couldn't help but notice that all of them were plagued with fruit flies and/or gnats. "In the larger establishments, bartenders at closing time would cover the taps with plastic wrap, or stuff them with bar napkins – practices which were messy, time-consuming and ultimately ineffective," Sullivan recalls. "The bartenders hated dealing with all that plastic waste."

That's when it hit him: what was needed was a reusable plug, to seal up the taps at night so that bugs would stay away. And not just any old plug, but one that came with some sort of cleaning apparatus attached. It would therefore perform a two-in-one function: warding off flies as well as giving an extra cleaning to the tap's interior in the process, helping prevent the buildup of bacteria, yeast and "beer stone" (calcium deposits).

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COMPANY HISTORY/Add Three

“We were using wire faucet brushes to clean the end portion of the tap faucet,” says Sullivan, “and it occurred to me that if we took a piece of brush and attached it to some sort of plug, it would keep the plug in place as well as serve as a cleaning device.”

Sullivan began working on prototypes with the help of his partner, brother Matt Sullivan. He went through five different models before hitting on the perfect combination of design and materials that he dubbed the SulliPlug.

The deceptively simple 2-inch-long device consists of a nylon-bristle brush with a stainless steel support, attached to an injected-plastic plug, ½ inch in diameter, which fits snugly to close off the opening of the tap. As the SulliPlug is inserted into the beer tap, the brush’s bristles impart extra cleaning action to the inside of the tap. Once in place, the SulliPlug’s tight fit ensures that no beer residue will escape overnight and attract gnats and fruit flies.

When it’s time to reopen the bar, the bartender simply pulls the plug – the brushing action pulling out bacteria – and then deposits the SulliPlug in a container with sanitizing solution, where it will remain until closing time. A quick rinse under the bar faucet, and the SulliPlug is ready to go back into position. Result: a bar that is delightfully clear of unsightly flying pests.

“Our invention’s made a huge difference in our bars,” says Sullivan. “No more irritating fruit flies. And while we’ve always prided ourselves on the cleanliness of our establishments, using the SulliPlug means that our taps are the cleanest they’ve ever been.

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COMPANY HISTORY/Add Four

“Every drinking establishment,” says Sullivan, “should have its own supply of the SulliPlug. This new product is quickly becoming an absolutely essential component of a clean, pest-free bar.”

SulliPlug is the barkeep’s best friend – and the fruit fly’s worst enemy. The SulliPlug’s simple yet revolutionary design solves an age-old tavern problem by keeping beer taps and surrounding area free of the annoying and unsightly flies, gnats and other winged pests that are naturally attracted to the residue inside. Each 2-inch long, ½-inch wide plastic SulliPlug with attached nylon bristle brush tightly seals any standard beer faucet, with the added benefit of its durable brush components giving taps an extra cleaning with each insertion and retraction. Snug, sturdy and sanitary, the SulliPlug only needs replacing once every six months, at a minimal cost (just \$3.99 MSRP per unit.) SulliPlug was invented by Chicago restaurateur and bar owner Brian J. Sullivan, who is also a partner in the popular and quickly-growing restaurant chain SkrineChops. For more information about SulliPlug and Brian Sullivan, please call 708-366-3519 or visit www.sulliplug.com.

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For further information, to secure a product sample or schedule an interview with company founder Brian Sullivan, please call Falk Associates at (847) 675.2580.