

# The Journal

## Berkeley County residents say floodwater is coming from P&G

[Crestfield Homeowners Association, Inc.]

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Submitted photo Flooding in the sediment pond at Procter & Gamble in Berkeley County is shown after an Aug. 21 storm.

MARTINSBURG — Residents from the Crestfield housing development have reached out to Berkeley County officials for help to remedy flood water they say is running over from the Procter & Gamble plant next door.

Members of the Crestfield Homeowners Association claim floodwater is being generated by P&G's sediment ponds located on the west side of the P&G plant site. The ponds are used to comply with EPA pollution control during plant construction.

Crestfield resident Greg Jones said the development has never experienced such extensive flooding prior to construction of the P&G site.

P&G plant construction started in September 2015 and is expected to be complete by 2020.

The 458-acre site will produce consumer products, including Bounce dryer sheets, Olay Body Wash, Pantene and Head & Shoulders shampoo.

“The water is collecting on the western side of the railroad tracks, goes through a culvert, then down about 600 feet and then dumping in our rainwater system that we have set up for the development,” Jones said.

Berkeley County legal counsel Norwood Bentley said county engineering officials have talked with P&G contractors to convert P&G's current sediment and erosion control measures to a permanent stormwater management system.

"We believe this will mitigate part of the problem in the area of Crestfield," Bentley said. "There are other sources of the problem they are experiencing, but the engineers think this will help."

P&G officials could not be reached for comment.

Built in 2001, the Crestfield housing development, located off U.S. 11, consists of 178 homeowner lots.

When Jones contacted the Berkeley County Sewer Department officials about the development flooding in May, he said they told him they would talk to P&G people about corrective actions.

"We assumed that it meant the current builder, the developer and P&G," Jones said.

After not hearing back, Jones said he followed up with county official 30 days later.

The Crestfield HOA also hired attorney Braun Hamstead to provide legal guidance on how to approach their flooding issue.

Hamstead told the HOA the excess water runoff from storms is a result of the P&G construction.

"When you create acres and acres of impervious surface, you increase water runoff — it's not rocket science," Hamstead said. "The sediment pond is to collect sediment, so if it fills with sediment it contains less water. Then that water is cast upon us."

Hamstead and two HOA board members met with Berkeley County officials to discuss options about how to eliminate flood water coming into the development.

"What these residents have experienced here is unlike anything they have experienced before," Hamstead said. "These people need to be secure in their property, and they have the legal right to be secure in their property. This development is not designed to handle that kind of water."

"Obviously, we need Procter & Gamble's help," Hamstead said. "What has happened is, that there is a natural drainage from that real estate on to a channel at the railroad tracks, and then under a culvert that leads into what is now Crestfield."

The Crestfield HOA hopes P&G can work with it to eliminate the development's flooding problem.

"We are hoping that P&G understands that we like them as a neighbor and work with us to get the problem resolved," Jones said. "But at the same time, we are not going to roll over and let them beat on us."

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SOURCE:

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