

likes the **Calmer** trash reduction kit he uses on his corn header (ph 309 629-9000; www.calmercornheaders.com). The kit includes 6-tooth gathering chain drive sprockets, revolving windrow knife rolls, and beveled stripper plates.

The 6-tooth gathering chain drive sprocket is 25 percent smaller than the factory 8-tooth sprocket, allowing the rolls to make additional revolutions, and making more of the plant disappear before the gathering chain lug can break it off. The windrow knife rolls use four rolls instead of six which creates two windrows per revolution and four modes of action. These modes repeat several times to successfully separate the ear and chop the stalk. The beveled stripper plates are longer to scoop up low hanging ears in down corn. They're straight in the front retrieving area to reduce ear wedging and beveled in the stripping area to allow the stalk to engage more ear shanks, husks and leaves.

"I was able to increase my ground speed and use less fuel when combining corn. It was also easier to set because of less trash in the combine," says Kline.

Joe Brock, Montville, Ohio: "The **Meg-Mo** blades I use on my lawn mower do a nice job of cutting my lawn. They're definitely a best buy (ph 877 625-0125; www.megmo.com)".

Chadwick H. Travis, Drasco, Ark.: "I bought a fuel-saving device made by **Power Products**. They claimed it would double fuel efficiency. However, I couldn't see that it helped at all. This company doesn't provide a phone number and has a drop box for an address. Don't waste your money."

Norm Pierce, Poplar Grove, Ill.: "My 1999 **Ford F-150** pickup is still a reliable workhorse. I bought it used with about 110,000 miles on it. Now it has more than 181,000 miles on it but still runs like new and has required only routine maintenance. I've driven only Fords since 1962."

Jim Ruen, Lanesboro, Minn.: "I'm not a neat person when it comes to chores. You can see what I've done and what colors I've painted by what's on my work clothes. That's one reason I jumped at the chance to get the woven poly coveralls from Lee Valley. The other reason is poison ivy. Our home is on a couple of wooded acres, and poison ivy is everywhere. When I go out with the weed whacker to clear around the garden or just to control the weeds and brambles, I'm sure to

get splattered with poison ivy plant juice at some point. If nothing else, my clothes are soaked with it, and I end up getting poison ivy from them.



"Now, when I fire up the weed whacker, I pull the coveralls on over my pants, shirt and boots. I don't use the drawstring hood as I was working with a safety helmet with face mask and hearing protectors. Whether in high weeds or working my way through thorny brambles, the coveralls work fine. After two weeks of use, I still don't have any poison ivy on me. The elastic strips around the arm and leg cuffs keep me free of ticks and mosquitoes too, both of which we have aplenty. I also did some gardening in water-soaked soils, and the coveralls kept the mud off. Once I got back to the house, I peeled them off and threw them in the washer. By the time they went through the spin cycle, they were practically dry.

"The only negative about them is the promise that I would stay cool and comfortable in

them. Cool is not the way I feel in them, and if they breathe I don't notice it.

"Will I use them again? You bet. I'll just make sure I wear cooler clothes underneath."

Bob Aubrey, Batavia, N.Y.: "I own three 1995 **Ford** Escorts and they're all best buys. My wife bought one of them new, and I bought the other two used within the past year. They have 170,000 to 195,000 miles on them and average about 38 mpg. The Escort is a small car but it can comfortably seat four people. None of my cars has required any engine or transmission work, and all of them always start even in the coldest weather.

"One of the cars is a station wagon, which my daughter and I use to deliver about 400 newspapers every weekend. We also use the station wagon to go fishing, hauling a canoe on top of it.

"These cars are reliable, fuel efficient, and fun to drive. They look good and never seem to age. It's easy to get parts for them, and they're reasonably priced."

Don Weisenborn, Bean Station, Tenn.: "My 1992 **Gravely** riding mower has required only routine maintenance since it was new. Unfortunately, they no longer make this machine."

Marvin Wells, Spencerville, Ind.: "I still drive it every day," says Marvin, owner of a 1988 **Chevrolet S-10** pickup with more than 475,000 miles on it. "It's equipped with a 4.3-liter engine and 704 transmission, and the drivetrain has never been touched. I've always done my own service work.

"My 1975 **Cub Cadet** 1650 garden tractor is a best buy. It's still going strong and I use it to mow more than three acres of grass. I'm 75 years young and still on-the-go."

John Cowell, Dolores, Colo.: "My **Speed Blaster** handheld, gravity feed sand blaster is my best buy (ph 800 446-5257; www.zendextool.com). It's lightweight, has



a replaceable ceramic nozzle, and is quick and easy to use. Just pour in some sand, plug in the air compressor, put on eye protection, and step outside. The design uses gravity to help force the blast media into a hardened steel mixing chamber. Compressed air then forces the particles through the ceramic nozzle at high velocity. It works great every time, and it's American-made."

Billy Fricks, Muldrow, Okla.: "My **Easy Set** mole trap is my worst buy. I went exactly by the directions for a month but didn't catch even one mole. Then I let my daughter use it for more than a month, and she didn't catch any moles, either."

James Portman, Columbus, Ohio: "My 1992 **Geo Metro** 2-door hatchback equipped with a 3-cyl. engine was one of my best buys ever. I used it for 15 years with no problems. It was a great car for running errands. No problems."

Bradley Potter, Lowell, Mich.: "My **Gravely** 260Z zero turn riding mower equipped with a Kawasaki 26 hp liquid-cooled engine is my best buy. I bought the mower new and changed the oil after the first 16 hours of use. Due to a block head move on my part, the oil drained out and I lost the

"Best Buy" Plastic Water Heater

Scott Mathews of Northfield, Minn., recently contacted FARM SHOW to tell us about his new plastic water heater.

"It's energy efficient and maintenance-free, and it won't rust," says Mathews.

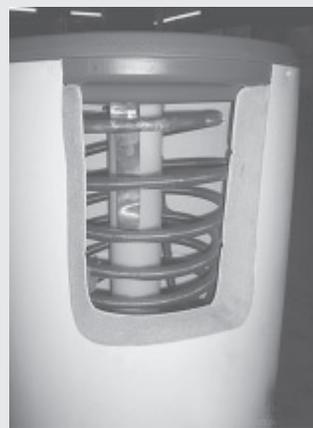
The electric-operated heater is made by the Howard Harris Builders, Inc., Nashville, Tenn. It combines features from on-demand water heaters - which heat water as it's needed - and conventional water heaters which store heated water. The 23-in. dia. plastic tank stands 37 1/2 in. tall and is equipped with a pop-out heating element. It has 2 1/2 in. of insulation and weighs 58 lbs. empty.

Upon installation you manually fill the holding tank with 31 1/2 gal. of water which never leaves the tank. This water is kept heated by a 5,500-watt element. Heat from the water in the holding tank is transferred to a 45-ft. finned copper coil, which holds 6 tenths of a gallon of water. This is the water you actually use. By transferring heat from the water in the holding tank, you heat only the water you use.

According to the company, the unit will recover the water temperature in half the time of a standard electric water heater. This is because of the smaller tank size and larger element, and because the minimum tank temperature doesn't drop as rapidly as a standard tank.

"I found this unit on the internet about a year ago and have never been more impressed with a product in my life," says Mathews. "I had never seen it advertised anywhere before. I called the company and talked to the guy who started the company. He's a large scale home builder who was fed up with the expensive water heaters on the market. I rent out a duplex and ordered two units. Two days later they arrived on a truck. I paid \$300 apiece for them plus \$100 for shipping.

"It has most of the benefits of a tankless water heater without the drawbacks. There's not much on it that can go wrong. The cop-



Electric-operated plastic water heater combines features from on-demand water heaters and conventional water heaters.

per tubes are bigger than the ones in a tankless water heater so mineral buildup shouldn't be as much of a problem. Also, the tube is located inside a non-pressurized water container so there's no need for pressure overflow or for a release valve like on a conventional tank. Because the tube is made from copper it should last a long time, and the plastic tank can't rust. And because it uses only one electric element there's no need for a bigger electric line - I can use a 30-amp breaker to operate it.

"The operating cost is about the same as for a natural gas water heater, and far less than an electric-operated water heater of similar capacity."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Howard Harris Builders, Inc., 3427 Ambrose Ave., Nashville, Tenn. 37207 (ph 877 840-9165 or 615 226-3700; fax 615 226-3701; hh20@bellsouth.net; www.howardharrisbuilders.com).

oil and ruined the engine. I took it back to the dealer, where the service manager said he'd try to get it fixed under warranty if possible. First he contacted the engine maker who said they wouldn't cover the engine. A new short block would have cost about \$2,600. Then he contacted the Gravely Company, and they said they'd replace the complete engine assembly which cost about \$4,200. My only obligation would be to pay \$250 for shipping and installation, which I did.

"This mower is now in its third season and works really well. It goes to show that dealing with a manufacturer who cares about its customers pays off in the long run."

Dennis Mitchell, Collins, Miss.: "My **Deere** 7710 tractor has 1,750 hours on it but has been in the dealer's shop for repairs to a 'blown-out transmission case'. It has been there for four weeks and they aren't finished with it yet. The repair bill will be more than \$10,000.

"The problem is the same as described by Dan Kibbe of Waterford, Penn., in FARM SHOW'S Vol. 32, no. 2. When I read about Kibbe's 'worst buy' just two weeks prior to my 'blown-out transmission', I thought, 'Oh oh. My tractor has the same symptoms'. It would go into park and into gear at the same time. And sure enough, the side literally blew off the transmission case.

"Last January the mechanic who's working on my tractor also fixed a **Deere** 7610 tractor equipped with the same 19-speed powershift transmission. It had 1,700 hours. Like on my tractor, it blew the side off the

transmission. The mechanic said the transmission linkage wears so when it's shifted into park, it's still in first gear. My advice to owners of **Deere** tractors equipped with 19-speed powershift transmissions is, watch out."

Leonard Gilbreath, Meridian, Texas: "One of my worst buys ever was a **Stihl** 029 chainsaw - until it turned into a best buy. The first time I tried to use this saw it wouldn't take gas. I got so mad that I put it back in my pickup and drove to the dealer, who reached over, pulled the brake off, and said, 'You're ready to go'. He said to me, 'Don't you remember? I told you it had a brake on it'. I looked at him and said, 'I remember now' and he laughed. Since then I've cut cord after cord of wood with it.

"My 1984 **Comando** 6-ft. shredder is a best buy. I've used it to mow hundreds of acres yet it's still going strong. I grease it every time I hook up. I use Lucas oil products which work well."

Kyle Carrigan, Corsicana, Texas: "I researched a lot of different 4-wheelers before I bought my 2006 **Arctic Cat**, and I'm glad I did. It's my best buy. At the time it was the only ATV that offered true 4-WD, plus the overall rating on chassis and ground clearance was at the top of its class. In my opinion, if you buy a Honda, Yamaha, or Kawasaki you're only paying for the name."

Bill Enger, Ford, Wash.: "My best, but also my most expensive, buy was a used 2005 **Volkswagen** diesel Jetta. After spending \$500 per month on regular gas for other vehicles

(Continued on next page)