



**Robert McMahon, Knoxville, Tenn.:** "We use a small 4-WD Kubota loader tractor and a 3-pt. mounted, 6-ft. Woods finish mower to cut grass. We farm a lot of rough terrain and when we made a sharp turn with the tractor, we accidentally bent the spindles on the mower's caster wheels.

"To solve the problem I replaced the 1-in. spindles with stronger 4140 tool steel. The tougher spindles worked better, but after a few years they finally bent causing the support arm bushings to wear out. That made the mower's wheels drag, which caused the deck to cut into the ground.

"Factory replacement arms and spindles cost more than \$500, so I went to [www.trailerpart.com](http://www.trailerpart.com), an internet trailer parts supplier, and bought four weld-on 1,750-lb. axle spindles and hubs for a total cost of about \$200. The spindles and hubs come as a kit to build your own trailer axle. The trailer



spindles and hubs are much stronger than the factory ones on the mower. The photos show 'before and after' photos of the conversion.

"I cut the original 1-in. dia. spindle off each mower wheel and welded on a new spindle in its place. The kit came with a 1/2-in. thick steel plate that was made to fit the 5-bolt pattern on a trailer's wheel hub. I drilled 5 holes into the plate and also cut a big hole for the wheel hub to go through the plate, and then bolted the plate to the hub on the caster wheel. Then I welded the plate to the support arm already on the mower deck. The new setup has 2-in. dia., true tapered double roller bearings just like on a trailer, which should last much longer than the mower's original bearings.

"My wife does most of the mowing and says she likes the job a lot better now because the mower always cuts even."



**Jim Borden converted an old hospital bed into an adjustable height workbench. He uses a foot pedal to raise and lower the unit anywhere from 16 to 34 in.**

## Hospital Bed Makes A Great Workbench

The moment Jim Borden saw an old hospital bed at a flea market he knew it would make a great adjustable height workbench. He bought it for \$20 and hauled it to his workshop.

"I threw everything away that wasn't important and disconnected the switches that raise the head and feet," he says. "I just wanted it to go up and down."

Borden knew that it would lift at least 350 lbs. That's enough to handle the antique furniture he restores.

Borden built a sturdy 83 by 38-in. top out of inch-thick oak boards he cut, planed and painted, then screwed into holes drilled in the bed frame. The height – raised and lowered with a foot pedal – ranges from 16 to 34 in. The low height makes it easier to

place objects on the workbench, and Borden adjusts the height so he never has to bend while working.

Besides working on furniture, he's used it to work on lawn mowers and other projects. A grinder, vise and other tools could easily be mounted on it for working on other projects.

"I wouldn't have done anything differently," Borden says about his bed-to-workbench conversion. "I left the castors on so that when I'm not using it I can roll it out of the way."

Check with hospitals and universities, he suggests, for old beds. His only advice: make sure it still goes up and down before buying.

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## Million Mile Dump Truck Still Looks Like New

Ron Peck has driven nearly 1.1 million miles delivering gravel with his Keystone Lime Co. Ford dump truck. They weren't easy miles. The company quarry is on the west side of the highest point in Pennsylvania, and most of the rock gets delivered to the east side of the mountain, explains Peck.

"We've had as much as 260 in. of snow in the winter," he says. "The engine is either pulling up hill or you're riding the Jake brakes down the other side with lots of twists and turns."

Bought new in 1995, the truck has a 450 hp, 3506C engine. It has a gross vehicle rating of 75,000 lbs. and a load rating of about 23 tons. Peck reports as many as five 80-mile trips per day with minimal problems.

"The truck's longevity has to be credited to Ron's regular maintenance, including oil changes and greasing and treating it like it was his own," says Melinda Gibson, Keystone Lime Co. "Several times we have offered to buy him a new truck, but he always turns us down, opting to run the 'million mile Ford' one more year."

Peck has the truck serviced with an oil change every 12,000 miles. The Super City dump box is original as well. It was made in nearby Somerset, Penn. He reports the engine was lightly overhauled at 450,000 miles and went through a major overhaul at 800,000 miles. The mountainous terrain has required two clutch replacements, and two transmission bearings have been replaced.

"It still has the original block, crankshaft, rear end and fuel injector pump," he says. "I figure the fuel pump has had well over 200,000 gal. through it."

This isn't the first high-miler Peck has driven in his 50 years of driving Ford trucks. He had two 500,000-mile trucks at Keystone, both of which were still going strong when he turned them over to other drivers. He has



**Ron Peck's 1995 Ford dump truck has a gross vehicle rating of 75,000 lbs. and a load rating of about 23 tons.**

driven four trucks in 41 years at Keystone, all Fords.

"When Melinda's father was boss, he wanted me to take a Chevy once, but I told him, 'You knew I was a Ford man when you hired me'," recalls Peck. "He was a Chevy man, but he bought a Ford for me."

Peck has been good to his Fords. Gibson says even the paint job is original. "At 1,095,300 miles, the truck has never been in an accident," says Gibson.

Peck credits his miles with the truck for its safety record. He recalls coming down a steep hill into a town and feeling that the steering wasn't quite right.

"I pulled over, and the hub on one front wheel was broken," says Peck. "When you run a truck every day, it becomes familiar." Gibson says Peck is nearing retirement. When he does, she expects to retire the truck too. Until he does, he remains the only driver.

"The boss would never put another driver in my truck," says Peck. "I don't think anyone else has ever dumped a load off that truck. That makes a difference too."

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## Remanufactured Injectors Boost Pickup Horsepower

You can boost horsepower on a 7.3 Power Stroke engine with remanufactured injectors from Performance Injection Systems (P.I.S.). The company offers a variety of options and is expanding to include common rail Dodge/Cummins engines from 2003 to 2007, newer Power Stroke engines, and 6.0 Power Stroke engines from 2003 to 2007. The company also sells turbochargers and other diesel engine parts and accessories.

"Injection systems for the 7.3 account for most of our business," says Tim Smith, P.I.S. "We can do pretty much any size injector or modifications required for a certain set up. Most of our products are used in competition vehicles, drag race or sled pulling trucks. We have some in mud racing, which is a big sport in Florida."

The company also remanufactures and modifies injectors for daily street use. Called Stage 3 injectors, the 200CC/80% injectors' nozzles increase flow by 80 percent over stock on Power Stroke 7.3 engines for more power and economy. With proper tuning the former stock engines will surpass 450 RWHP (rear wheel hp).

Customers can send their current injection systems in for remanufacturing to their specifications. If they can't afford or prefer to avoid down time while the set is being worked on, they can order a set to meet their needs and pay a core charge. Once their set has been replaced, they can send the old ones in and get a refund on the core charge.

"Some people prefer to reuse their own as they know the maintenance record and how they have been used," says Smith. "If you



**Remanufactured injectors can be used to boost pickup horsepower on several different engine brands.**

send a set in, we can usually turn it around in 3 to 5 days. If you order a set off the shelf, we have next day service."

Remanufactured sets start at \$1,195 per set and range to \$2,195 for the most expensive. The 200CC/80% injectors are priced at \$1,895. All injectors are inspected, modified and flow bench tested in house. Custom tuning is available for both 7.3 and 6.0 Power Stroke injectors.

Smith asks readers to call the toll free number to discuss products they would like to order or order direct from the website. He doesn't list the postal address on the website or here to avoid people sending parts for remanufacturing before discussing the project.

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