

It has been used a lot over the years but has always been reliable. I grew up with this tractor on the farm and have now inherited it. I use it extensively on our 37-acre homestead with the implements shown in the photo. We used the tractor to rototill about 3 acres last year alone. It has been quite a valued product over its life."

R. Allen, Clare, Mich.: "I think Kroil rust solvent and lubricant is a great product for farmers (www.kanolabs.com; ph 800 311-3374).

Robert McMahan, Knoxville, Tenn.: "We heat with wood and have been using a Vornado Evap40 Vortex humidifier in our house during the heating season for the past 15 years (www.vornado.com; ph 800 234-0604). It comes with two 2-gal. tanks and 2 filter pads and puts 1 1/2 to 2 gal. of water per day into the air. We have spring water piped into our home, so initially the filters would turn black and stop working after about a month.

"To solve the problem, for 5 years now we've been adding 1 oz. of hydrogen peroxide per 2 gal. of water when refilling. One benefit of this is no bacteria growth. Hydrogen peroxide changes the atomic valence of the minerals, allowing them to absorb into the entire filter pad so it'll continue to work almost all season long. Saves money on filters and there's no breeding ground for bacteria. In effect, the filters turn into white limestone sponges. There's less cleanup and there's almost no limestone buildup on the hard plastic parts. This idea should be used only on evaporative-type humidifiers that use filter pads."

Lavie Schliefert, Deepwater, Mo.: "I bought my 1999 Deere 345 riding mower used with 204 hrs. on it. It now has 2,233 hrs. and has required only general maintenance of the belts and blades, as well as 2 spindle replacements. It's equipped with a Kawasaki 12 hp engine."

James Hanzel, Cazenovia, Wis.: "In May of 1974 I bought a New Holland Hayliner 273 small square baler, and we're still using it with no problems not caused by the operator.

"I use a BaleSkiis plastic liner on the baler's bale chamber which works great (www.LDAGmachinery.com; ph 866 889-3846). It eliminates knotted problems and broken bales, stops bale chamber plugging and buildup, and results in perfect compact bales."

Dam's Truck and Tractor, Gilman, Wis.: "About a year ago I bought a DeWalt heavy duty, 20-volt cordless drill after my old Makita model gave out (it was a good drill, too). I used it on my 5-in. dia. ice fishing auger and was able to cut up to 20 holes in 2-ft. thick ice between battery charges."

Randy Hudson, Loraine, Ill.: "The McCulloch Pro Mac 610 chainsaw I bought new in 1981 has cut loads and loads of wood. I don't know how many bars and chains it has gone through, but it's a lot. I keep thinking one of these years this saw will quit working, but it just keeps on going. Amazing!"

Octave La Caze, Jr., Colfax, La.: "When I retired from the Air Force in 1970 I bought a new Deere 820 30 hp tractor with a used battery along with a new 3-pt. mounted disk and 5-ft. Deere bush hog. I used this set for more than 16 years and never had a problem with the battery."

John P. Hartman, Bedford, Ind.: "Two years ago I bought a Phase-A-Matic static phase converter for use on an older Tree vertical milling machine equipped with 3-phase motors. I bought the converter on sale from msdirect.com, an industrial supply company. Installation was simple, and the mill is running great with ample power."

Paul Duck, Forestville, N.Y.: "About 28 years ago I bought an IH 350 utility tractor equipped with an aftermarket loader and backhoe. This equipment had been heavily used before I bought it, but over the years only moderate repairs have been necessary. After many hrs. of use it has exceeded my expectations and has never let me down."

Eddie Goff, Campbellsville, Ky.: "My 2003 Exmark 60-in. zero turn riding mower has about 1,500 hrs. on it operating in all kinds of weather, yet has required only minimal maintenance (www.exmark.com; ph 402 223-6300). It has worn out a dozen sets of blades but still has the original rear tires. In my opinion, this mower outperforms all other brands and is easy to work on. I recommend the mulching option because it stops unwanted clippings from blowing onto sidewalks and driveways and leaves yards looking great. It also lets you trim grass on both sides of the mower.

"I bought 3 Poulan leaf blowers and they all developed ignition failures at very low hours. All of them were still under warranty so they were either repaired or replaced, but all failed again. I guess you get what you pay for. My old Husqvarna leaf blower lasted for years."

Dean H. Schutte, Kenyon, Minn.: Dean says his 2013 Deere 5045E diesel utility tractor, equipped with a Deere 553 front-end loader, "works great and has easy-to-use controls. It also has much bigger front wheel assist tires and a bigger axle than the competition, and it's about 12,000 lbs. heavier. I love this tractor."

Richard Grigoleit, Hines Creek, Alberta: "My 1977 David Brown 990 tractor has more than 9,200 hrs. on it, yet I've replaced only 2 water pumps, a fuel transfer pump, and a new set of tires. I've used this tractor to pull a 10-ft. heavy duty cultivator, a 4-bottom plow, and a 10-ft. disk. I've also done haying work with it. It's easy on fuel.

"I use my 1977 and 1982 model Homelite XL-76 chainsaws to cut about 10 cords of firewood a year. One saw is on its third bar and the other on its second. Neither one has ever been overhauled."

Bill Chase, McIntosh, S. Dak.: A 1967 IH 806 diesel tractor rates as Bill's "best buy". "My father-in-law bought this tractor new and used it year 'round on the farm for everything from spring plowing to planting, cutting hay, and feeding livestock. It always starts right up and never lets us down. The tractor now has almost 13,000 hours on it without ever having an engine overhaul, and it's now serving the third generation of our family with daily use. No fancy electronics, just reliable power."

Donald T. Duellman, Marshfield, Wis.: "No problems with my Kubota L4630 HT loader tractor. This is my third Kubota tractor, and all of them have always started in cold weather. They're also easy on fuel and have a lot of power.

"I bought my Bobcat twin rotary 72-in. brush mower equipped with rear rollers. However, I soon discovered the inside roller bearing holders were made very weak so I welded metal supports on them, which helped. The company says they've now corrected this problem."

"The company says they've corrected this problem."

Lynn Olds, Lima, Ohio: "I'm impressed with my 2001 Dodge 2500 4-WD longbed

Gopher-Killing Machine Helped Build His Business

Richard Murphy has to turn away business since he started using Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Control (PERC) machines to kill gophers and ground squirrels with pressurized carbon monoxide. He has more demand for services than he has time in the day.

"It's the best tool I've found in 37 years of doing pest control, working with bait, smoke bombs and toxins," says Murphy. "I was always happy with 30 to 50 percent control. With the PERC units, I get 80 percent control and have seen it as high as 100 percent."

PERC units generate pressurized carbon monoxide to fill tunnels. The trailer-mounted unit includes a gas engine, a pressurized tank and stainless steel wands with hoses to deliver the gas into tunnels.

Allen Hurlburt at H&M Gopher Control developed the machines and has more than 900 in the field. He says Murphy is not alone in building a business around the technology.

"We have customers using them to control rattlesnakes in Montana, bats in Oregon and armadillos in Texas," says Hurlburt. "We even have several guys in Oklahoma and Texas using them to control fire ants."

In tests conducted by the University of California, Davis, the PERC system achieved 97 1/2 percent and 100 percent control in two, 1-acre plots set up by Murphy. The plots were carefully monitored by university biologists before and after treatment.

Murphy notes that in real life it is harder to get an accurate count since gophers and squirrels can quickly move into a treated area. Murphy does about 90 percent of his work in almond orchards. Digger squirrels there can damage the crop, destroy vital



Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Control machine forces pressurized carbon monoxide into tunnels to kill gophers.

drop irrigation tubing and leave holes that almonds fall into at harvest.

"Growers tell me they can lose at least 300 lbs. of nuts per acre at \$4 per lb. (2015 price)," says Murphy.

Murphy has a model 412 PERC that puts out about 33 cfm and a model 620 that puts out about 70 cfm. H&M also makes smaller machines. Prices range from \$5,425 for a skid-mounted model 206 to \$15,075 for a tandem axle model 620.

Murphy is booked 6 months ahead and admits that if he wanted to hire employees, he could keep 4 machines busy all the time. However, he admits there is a downside to the work.

"It's probably the most boring thing I've ever done," he says. "Once I find tunnels with gophers or squirrels, I put in 5 to 6 probes, cover the holes and let the gas in. Each set of holes take 5 to 8 min. and then I move on to the next."

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pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter, 24-valve Cummins diesel engine and 6-speed manual transmission. This is my second Dodge pickup; the first one was a 2-WD model with about 550,000 miles on it when I traded it. My 2001 model has about 240,000 miles on it. It gets good mileage empty or pulling a 22-ft. deckover trailer loaded with a Cat 247B skid loader. This pickup has the best 5.9-liter, 24-valve engine ever built. I plan to drive it until the body falls off."

Larry Gott, Shepherd, Mich.: "Larry's satisfied with his 2013 Heatilator Cab50 wood pellet burner (www.heatilatorcochoice.com; ph 877 427-3316). "This is the first wood stove we've owned that's attached to a wall thermostat and self-ignites. It also has a huge 3-bag hopper, which we really like. All we have to do is keep it clean and add pellets. We won't buy another stove without these features. The only repair we had to make was to the igniter at a cost of only \$42.

"Our 2014 Eden Pure electric heater performed well until October 2014 when it quit working. We returned it to the manufacturer and they promptly sent another one, but it didn't work either. They sent us another one and it worked well for a while, but then it failed last October. We returned it, and 4 weeks later the company sent us a Wall-Hugger model. It works great. I hope it keeps on working, because we've spent about \$400 dealing with faulty units."

River Maple Farm, Inc., Bernardston, Mass.: "We bought a used Deere 5420

loader tractor last spring that had a worn-out bucket, so we replaced it with a new HLA 6-ft. bucket. It's built heavy and we really like it (www.hlaattachments.com; ph 519 291-4162).

Fred Binkowski, Linton, N. Dak.: "My Speeco 5-ton electric log splitter uses an electric motor to drive a hydraulic pump, so it doesn't use any gas or oil (www.speeco.com; ph 800 525-8322). It comes with an automatic push plate and a built-in log cradle. The company says it can split wood up to 21 in. dia. with no problem, which I think is amazing. I have it mounted on a bench next to my shop stove which is very convenient. No problems."

Darwin McLain, Jerome, Mich.: "I use my 2002 Kubota BX22 loader backhoe for loading wood into a dump trailer. It starts right up every time."

Rich Conklin, Wellington, Ohio: "I had to iron out a couple of bugs when I first got it home, but since then it has been a total joy to operate," says Rich about his 2012 Mahindra 5010 tractor. "It's built strong, and the 50 hp diesel engine has plenty of power. The cab stays warm in winter and cool in summer. I find it works best to load the rear tires with beet juice for stability.

"The only problem is that the dealer where I bought the tractor quit handling Mahindra equipment so if something ever happens to the tractor, I'll have to drive about 25 miles to my closest dealer."

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