

in tough, off-shore environments on oil rigs for the past year and a half.

"We bought them for their portability," says Williams. "They've turned out to be a real asset. They haven't needed any maintenance which, considering where they're being used, is a real testimony in itself."

The portable blasters come in several sizes. The smallest hold 8 to 10 gal. of blasting medium and require a minimum airflow of 10 1/2 cfm. The adjustable operating pressure of 2.9 to 116 psi lets the operator clean practically any surface.

The IBIX units work with a wide range of materials from soda and organic grit to sand. Optional "H2O" models also work with water.

With an empty weight of only 22 lbs., the blaster can be rigged into a backpack or sling carrier for hands-free operation. Air and grit controls are belt-mounted for easy access.

**Brenda R. Hawk, Elida, Ohio:** "No problems with my 2004 Sears Craftsman LT1000 21 hp garden tractor equipped with an automatic transmission. I use it to mow, cultivate my gardens, plow snow, and grade my driveway. It has required only routine maintenance. The automatic transmission is a plus, since I'm handicapped and can't feel my legs."

**Greg Bisel, Taylors Falls, Minn.:** "My 2012 Kubota ZG327 zero turn riding mower works perfect and does a beautiful job of cutting grass. It has required only routine maintenance."

**David Troyer, Lime Springs, Iowa:** David's impressed with professional grade hammers made by the Stiletto Tool Co. (www.stiletto.com). Their hammers have Titanium heads that are said to deliver 97 percent of the swing energy with only 45



percent of the weight of most steel hammers. And they say the Titanium head dampens 10 times more of the recoil vibrations than a standard steel hammer does. It means you get less tired and are also less likely to develop carpal tunnel syndrome in your wrist, elbow, or shoulder, says the company.

"Every carpenter or handyman should have a hammer like this one," says David. "The hammer I use has a 15-oz., 18-in. long curved Titanium handle, and it's supposed to have the driving force of a 24-oz. steel hammer. The hammer comes with a 180 degree side nail puller, magnetic nail starter, and replaceable heads. I became a dealer and sell the hammer for \$170 plus S&H."

**Walker E. James, Orwell, Vt.:** "I bought my 1988 International Harvester 5130 2-WD and 5120 4-WD tractors used and have put about 6,000 hours on each one. The 5130 is equipped with a shuttle transmission and works great for round baling, mowing and all-around field work. The 5120 is equipped with a manual transmission and is excellent for loader work and moving bales. Both tractors have plenty of power."

**Chris Schriber, Redway, Calif.:** Chris is happy with his Blaze King wood stove (ph 509 522-2730; www.blazeking.com). "I bought this awesome wood stove thinking

that the bigger the hopper, the longer the burn time. Not true. The company claimed the Blaze King could burn for up to 40 hours on a single load of dry wood, whereas a similar size wood stove without the same technology would be lucky to go 12 hours. Well, my Blaze King did even better – it went for 48 hours, and I could have let it burn for another six hours. I can't say enough good things about this stove."

**Earl A. Mueller, Hermann, Mo.:** Earl's

**"The paint peeled off the hood, and 3 hydraulic pumps failed in just one year."**

disappointed with his New Holland TN75 tractor. "The paint peeled off the hood, and 3 hydraulic pumps failed in just one year."

**Harold Blehm, Valdez, Alaska:** "FARM SHOW is far and away my best buy. Over the years I've found many new products to purchase and ideas to copy. I share these ideas with anyone who will hold still. FARM SHOW is the big box store of creative thinking. Long may you prosper!"

**John James, Pierson, Fla.:** John's impressed with Star Brite liquid electrical tape (ph 800 327-8583; www.starbrite.com). "This product provides air and watertight sealing of electrical and mechanical joints. Capillary action allows it to penetrate any seam or joint, and it's easy to apply and remove. It's available as a liquid with an applicator brush cap, or in a tube. The company claims the product to be ultraviolet light-resistant, but I'll wait a year to vouch for that."

**Eddie L. Wilson, St. Louis, Mo.:** "I couldn't be happier with my 2008 Scag Tiger 24 hp Cub riding mower (www.scag.com). I use it six days a week, sun up to sun down, with no problems. All I have to do is change the oil. I've made a living off this mower, yet it still runs like the day I bought it."

**Richard Barngrover, Wakarusa, Kan.:** "I've used Hydrotex grease for more than 40 years and have never found anything else that even comes close to its performance (ph 800 527-9439; www.hydrotexlube.com). Water can't penetrate this grease. It's costly but you don't need to use much, and it stays where you put it."

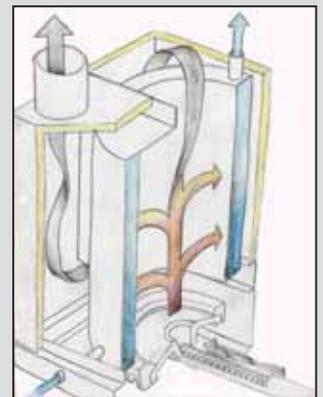
**D.L. Mertell, Independence, Mo.:** He likes his 2013 MTD 4-cycle rototiller. "I had been using a Mantis model, but it was hard to start and wanted to jump out of my hands whenever it hit hard ground. My MTD is easy to start and doesn't try to get away from me."

**Clark A. Carns, Fontanelle, Iowa:** "I bought a 2012 Harley Davidson Road Glide Ultra motorcycle. The front forks felt loose 2 days after I bought it, so I went back to the dealer and was told that sometimes the forks shake on deceleration. Two months later, I was in the hospital with injuries when the bike became unstable and crashed. Then the dealer called to tell me they had filed the wrong papers, so the title didn't match the bike they gave me. I found out afterward there's a service bulletin requiring a tighter adjustment to the front end."

**Maurice M. Mckercher, Foxboro, Wis.:** "I bought my 2000 Deere 4100 tractor used with about 450 hours on it, and now it has 667 hours on it. This tractor has done work I never thought it could do. We raise Alpacas and I use this tractor to dump all the manure just outside the barn, and then every spring I haul it to a compost site. It's a great little tractor that's fun to operate. I've got to be careful, though, as a heavy bucket load can make the tractor tippy."



E-Z Clean coal-burning furnace has been on the market since the 1980's. The totally enclosed system is designed for an efficient burn and easy cleaning.



## "Best Buy" Coal Burning Furnace

**Neil Eckelberg, Stanley, N. Dak.:** "My E-Z Clean furnace from Maertens Mfg. takes the hassle and the mess out of burning coal. I wanted a furnace that would still work for me when I was older, and this one will."

"With a coal field only 50 miles away, I can heat my big old farmhouse for only \$600 a year. It used to take 500 gal. of propane per month in the winter."

"When heat is needed, the auger automatically feeds coal on to a rotating burner plate. As the coal burns, the ashes are scraped off into a sealed catch pit. When I want to remove the ashes, I switch on an auger to send them to an outside trailer for easy removal. The totally enclosed system is designed for efficiency as well as ease of cleaning."

With Eckelberg's encouragement, FARM SHOW contacted Henry Maertens, Maertens Mfg. Maertens says the design is well proven. He built the first one for an uncle in the late 1970's before starting to sell them commercially in the 1980's.

"The first one is still functional," says Maertens. "We've made very few design changes since. We also make conventional boilers as large as 2 million btu's and are toying with the idea of making a 500,000-btu E-Z Clean."

He says the standout feature has always been ease of cleaning. "Just grab a lever and move it back and forth," says Maertens.

**William Gardiner, Montross, Va.:** "My 2012 Deere 4005 tractor has plenty of power, steers easy, and is easy on fuel. However, it could use a better seat and the foot throttle should be relocated because it gets in the way when braking."

"My 2012 Swisher walk-behind Trim-N-Mow is poorly designed. It's equipped with a cheap Briggs & Stratton engine and an inefficient air filter. There's no way to drain the oil except through the filler neck and by upending the entire mower. Also, grass tends to pack around the drive pulley."

**Junior Scoggins, Ozark, Ark.:** "It's trouble-free and operates like a dream," says Junior about his 2011 Hustler Fast Track super duty riding mower equipped with a 54-in. deck. "This is my fourth Hustler, and I sold all the others to my friends. These mowers are so good I don't have to worry about my friends getting a bad deal. I use this one to do custom mowing."

On the negative side, he lists his Howe 3-pt. mounted, 5-ft. rotary brush cutter. "I've owned this cutter for 5 or 6 years but haven't used it a lot. However, almost every time I do use it I have to weld on it somewhere. There aren't many places on it where something hasn't been welded back together. The 3-pt.

"Internal scrapers do the work, and all the ash and dust falls into the enclosed ash pan. No opening doors or unbolting covers to get access to use brushes."

The easy cleaning feature is especially important as Maertens' boilers are more complex than most. The hot gasses released by the burning coal travel nearly 3 times farther than in most boilers, he explains.

"Most boilers have about 5 ft. of travel from the burner head to the chimney," he says. "In ours, the gas travels 14 ft. as it goes up, down and around the pressure vessel. For even greater efficiency, the passageways are narrow. Combined with the time the flue gasses spend in the chamber, this allows more heat to be absorbed by the water."

Maertens says the design produces maximum heat recovery without creating problems. Other coal burning designs avoid the narrow passageways and long travel due to a tendency for coal ash to plug them up.

"Plugging up is not a concern with our internal scrapers," says Maertens. "Just pull the lever every few days or more often if you like."

The E-Z Clean furnace is available as a 175,000-btu model, priced at \$6,500 and a 350,000-btu model priced at \$8,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Maertens Mfg., 2245 41st Ave. S.W., Center, N. Dak. 58530 (ph 701 794-3183; henrym@westriv.com; www.maertensmfg.com).

top link has been a constant problem."

**John D'Amour, Minot, Maine:** "My 2012 DR walk-behind mower/trimmer cuts through waist-high weeds and grass with no problems. My model is self-propelled, which I recommend. The machine could use a bit more power to the wheels, as I have to help push it uphill."

**Bill Pittman, Bakersville, N.C.:** "No problems with my 2009 Sears Craftsman YTS 400 riding mower. I use it a lot to mow about 2 acres of grass, but the V-belts have never been replaced and are still in good condition."

"My 1995 Honda 5013 4-WD garden tractor was equipped with 3 expensive V-belts, and 2 of them had to be replaced 3 times during just one season."

**Richard Propp, Sidney, Mont.:** "X-Cyto plant growth regulator made our pine and poplar trees grow like crazy, but we ran out of the product and haven't been able to get it again (www.conklin.com). We also like the company's Fuel Mate Plus gas conditioner. It makes our tractors more fuel efficient and keeps their fuel filters cleaner."

**Carlos Bahler, Fairbury, Ill.:** "The Deere 9770 combine I bought used last year is a smooth running machine and has

*Continued on next page*