

Hanging Mats Handy For All Sorts Of Uses

You can hang these thick rubber mats from corral or gate panels to add safety or privacy, says Humane Mfg., Baraboo, Wis.

"We came up with the idea after one of our dealers was severely injured in an accident when she was thrown off her horse," says a company spokesman. "The mats are thick enough that they won't flap around in the wind like a tarp and they're also more weather resistant."

The 4-ft. wide, 3/8-in. thick mats are made from recycled semi truck tires and are fitted with grommets to make them easy to hang. They can be used on the sides of pens, corrals, horse stalls, or even used as window covers inside livestock trailers. They come

in lengths ranging from 5 to 8 ft. long. Custom sizes are also available.

The mats can also be screwed onto the inside of wooden horse stalls, so that if a horse kicks the side of the stall the mat will protect both the wood and the horse. The mats can also be used as divider curtains; for example, to separate studs from mares. Or you can line the inside of a livestock trailer to insulate it in cold weather.

A 4 by 8-ft. mat with 9 grommets sells for \$71.70 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Humane Mfg. LLC, 805 Moore St., Baraboo, Wis. 53913 (ph 800 369-6263 or 608 356-8336; fax 8338).



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Simple Root Cutter Is Quick, Easy To Use

If you've ever had to dig around trees for any reason, you know what a problem their roots can be. You can cut the roots with an axe or saw, but it's hard on hand tools.

Cliff Brandenburg, Beecher City, Illinois, has a simple idea that works faster and more accurately than either a saw or an axe. He made a root cutter by cutting up an 11-in. section of leaf spring from an old truck. He notched a 1-1/2 by 6-in. threaded pipe nipple so one end fits over the section of leaf spring. Then he welded them together and sharpened the other end of the spring. For a handle, he uses a 4 ft. length of 1 1/2 in. galvanized pipe. When he sharpened the steel blade, he rounded the corners a little.

"You could put a spade or shovel handle on it, but the weight of the pipe handle helps in cutting through roots," he explains. "The heavier it is, the easier it will cut through roots."

The spring Brandenburg used was 4 in. wide, but he says you could use any width of spring you could find. He used a spring rather than just any piece of scrap steel because spring steel is hardened so it holds the sharp edge better.

"This will cut through roots you wouldn't try to cut with a spade. It's easier to use than an axe because you can aim it better. Swinging an axe isn't possible in some cases, either," he says.

Once you've cut the root, finished your task, and re-filled the hole, you may want to pack the dirt back in. To do this, Brandenburg made a hand tamper that uses the same handle as the root cutter by welding a 1 1/2-in. pipe coupling in the center of a 6-in. square piece of 1-in. thick steel plate. "It's pretty simple, but it really does a good job of packing soil," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Cliff Brandenburg, RR 2, Box 42, Beecher City, Ill. 62414-9310 (ph 618 487-5247).



Brandenburg made root cutter from an 11-in. section of leaf spring.



To build the generator, you'll need a 3 to 5 hp vertical shaft engine and a working alternator. Mounting the right pulley on the engine shaft is the most important part of the conversion.

How To Make A Cheap Backup Generator Out Of A Lawn Mower Engine

With just a little bit of work, you can turn an old lawnmower engine and a used automotive alternator into a generator to provide temporary electricity in remote locations, or for backup power at home.

We found this idea on the Internet at www.TheEpicenter.com/tow082099/html.

Site owner is The Epicenter, Eugene, Ore., which sells emergency preparedness supplies and provides ideas for their use. There are a couple of other options for home-built generators on this site, but we liked this one be-

cause it makes use of an easy-to-find vertical-shaft lawn mower engine.

To build this generator, you'll need a working 3 to 5 hp vertical shaft engine and a working - used, new or rebuilt - alternator. A GM type alternator is recommended.

You can probably figure out how to mount the alternator on the old lawnmower and even work in a belt tightener. But if you'd prefer, Epicenter designed a steel bracket on which both the engine and the alternator can be mounted. This bracket allows use of either



Full-width mud flap fits quickly onto a receiver hitch and locks in place with set screws in less than a minute.

Full-Width Mud Guard Keeps Trailers Clean

Bob Berg didn't like cleaning the salt and sludge off his snowmobile trailer after driving miles over snowy roads. If it was really cold, the frozen ice and dirt mixture was impossible to remove.

Normal mud flaps help but don't completely solve the problem. And Berg didn't like the idea of full-width mud flaps on his truck all the time.

His solution was to design a full-width mud flap that fits quickly onto a receiver hitch.

Called the "Kwik PFYT" (Protection For Your Tow), the full-width mud guard locks in place with set screws in less than a minute.

Berg makes two styles of Kwik PFYT. One has a solid plastic flap, for use on rough terrain and gravel roads. For highway use, a second style uses nylon brushes. Both are made with an anti-sail feature, so they won't

blow back at higher speeds.

Construction is of stainless steel and high strength extruded aluminum, so they're strong but lightweight. Berg says his first units were made of steel angle iron, but the steel rusted and pitted when hit by stones. Switching to stainless steel and aluminum eliminated the need for paint, too.

The Kwik PFYT is available for most full-size pickups. Berg also makes sizes to fit dually pickups, motor homes and fifth wheel trailers. He's considering versions for smaller pickups and Jeeps. A Kwik PFYT guard weighs about 25 lbs. and sells for under \$300.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bob Berg, R.R. 2, Fergus Falls, MN 56537 (ph 218 739-3437; fax 218 739-2496; E-mail: kwikpfyt@pretel.com).

three- or four-bolt engines. The Epicenter bracket can itself be mounted on lengths of 2 by 4 to make a base.

Mounting the right pulley on the engine shaft is the most important part of the conversion. Vertical shaft lawn mowers rely on the weight of the mower blade to keep the engine turning smoothly. To replace the missing weight of the blade, the Epicenter people recommend using a cast iron pulley which can be hard to find.

You should use a 4 to 5-in. pulley on the shaft. If you're using a newer model engine with a "limited" throttle, you may have to modify the carburetor and throttle so you can throttle up and keep the engine going when the alternator is engaged.

Epicenter recommends an "A" style V-belt. Just be sure the belt fits properly on the en-

gine pulley, since that's where you're getting the torque to drive the alternator. If it slips there, you're going to be disappointed with the output.

Gas tank capacity on mower engines is only about one hour so you may want to add a larger tank. You use the generator to jump-start engines. Add a DC to AC converter and you've got portable power for 120-volt tools, appliances, etc. With a bank of batteries, it can be used as the electrical power supply for remote cabins, sheds, RV's, etc. AC converters are available from around 100 watts up to 3000 watts.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Epicenter Supplies, LLC, 384 Wallis St. #2, Eugene, Ore. 97402 (ph 541 684-0717; Web site: www.TheEpicenter.com/tow082099.html).