

Compressed Air Powers Low-Cost “Gopher Gasser”

“It’s cheaper and far more quiet than underground blasters and can be just as effective,” says John Rogers, Occidental Nuisance Wildlife Control Co., about his company’s new low-cost “gopher gasser”. It’s designed to kill gophers using carbon monoxide gas, forced down into burrows via a small battery-operated, rechargeable air compressor.

Rogers also makes the Safekrush underground rodent blaster that was featured in our last issue (Vol. 27, No. 3). It uses a propane explosion to kill pest animals including ones with large dens such as ground squirrels, prairie dogs, woodchucks, badgers, coyotes and armadillos.

The idea behind the Oxygas is to use an 8-lb. cordless air compressor to force gas from a CO₂ cartridge or vehicle exhaust down into underground tunnels.

“It works better than underground blasters because there’s no oxygen tank or hoses to drag around and because there’s no noise - all you hear is the compressor. And, it costs far less - the entire system sells for only \$277 compared to underground blasters that sell for up to \$1,900,” says Rogers.

“Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless and has no smell so the animal never even realizes it’s there. The problem is that until now, there was no way to force the gas

throughout the animal’s entire tunnel system, even if you used vehicle exhaust.”

To use cartridges with the Oxygas, a flame-proof vinyl “wind guard” with a 2 1/2-in. dia. hole in it is placed over the burrow’s opening. The operator then lights the fuse on the cartridge and places it through the hole and into the burrow. Then he fits the foot of the Oxyjet inside the hole and flips a switch to turn on the compressor. He runs the compressor for one to two minutes, then turns it off for about 30 seconds to let the cartridge build up more fumes. The pattern is repeated in 20 to 30-second spurts to keep driving the gas into the burrow.

To treat with exhaust from a vehicle, you follow the same procedure except that you attach one end of a hose to the exhaust of the vehicle and the other end to a port on the Oxyjet. The compressor pulls exhaust from the vehicle and pushes it into the hole.

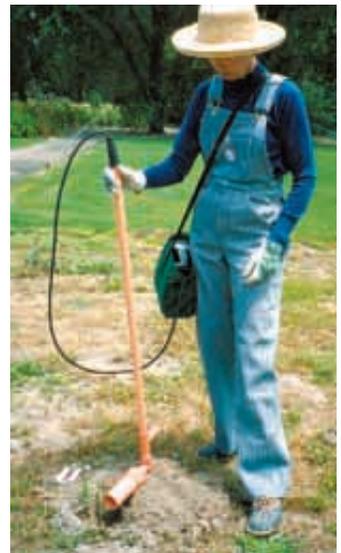
“The compressor forces the gas to reach every nook and cranny of the tunnel system,” says Rogers. “We recommend using the compressor in short bursts in order to let the smoke build up, so that when you run the compressor again it pushes big wads of gas along. If you’re using just the cartridge you install a cap over the port. If you want, you can use both vehicle exhaust and gas from a

cartridge at the same time. The more carbon monoxide, the better.”

Rogers says CO₂ gas cartridges have been available for a long time. The idea is to stick a fuse in the cartridge, light it and place it in the hole, then cover the opening. “The problem is that without compressed air, the gas moves slowly through the tunnel and doesn’t always penetrate the deepest recesses of the tunnels so the animal doesn’t always get killed. Also, if the soil is dry much of the gas gets absorbed by the soil without ever reaching the animal,” says Rogers.

The cartridges are commonly available at USDA government offices. They come in two sizes depending on animal size. The small cartridges sell for \$1.48 apiece plus S&H and the large ones for \$2.60. “In many states you can buy the cartridges in hardware or feed stores, or you can order them from your state’s fish and game department. These cartridges are considered an unregistered pesticide so you don’t need any license or permits to use them,” says Rogers, who notes that his company can provide state-by-state information on where to buy the gas cartridges.

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Oxygas uses an 8-lb. cordless air compressor to force gas from a CO₂ cartridge or vehicle exhaust down into underground tunnels.

824-0903; fax 707 824-0922; email: sales@safekrush.com; website: www.safekrush.com).

They Use Golf Carts Like ATV’s

Used golf carts make excellent motorized feed carts for use in and around a stable or ranch. Joe Taylor of Philomath, Oregon, didn’t want to spend the kind of money a Gator-type vehicle would have required, and his solution turned out to have several advantages.

“The biggest plus with electric-powered golf carts is that they’re quiet and fume-free for use inside barns,” Taylor says.

He bought two used carts for \$900 and \$700. Taylor spent just three hours modifying the first cart, adding a wood dump box on back for hauling lawn clippings, bales, etc. He put a flatbed on the second cart, made from angle iron and plywood. The bed sits at a 75 degree angle and accommodates up to three hay bales standing on end.

By making use of the passenger side seats and floor space, both units can also haul pails of grain or bags of feed supplement.

Materials for the modifications only cost about \$20 for each cart, according to Taylor.

A remote throttle control at the rear of the carts allow the operator to walk behind the unit on straight, flat surfaces, such as the al-



Flatbed on cart sits at a 75 degree angle and accommodates up to three hay bales standing on end.

leys between stalls. When feeding horses, it saves time and energy by eliminating the need to sit down each time the cart is moved forward.

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Joe Taylor added a wood dump box on back of this electric-powered golf cart for hauling lawn clippings, bales, etc.

Simple Shaker Helps Sort Through Dirt

Whether he’s looking for marbles and coins in old dumps or searching for gemstones on Topaz Mountain, Bill Snyder hits paydirt the easy way. He shakes it out with his motorized screening cart.

“I also use it for sifting stones out of topsoil for my gardens,” says Snyder of Copperton, Utah.

Snyder’s shaker consists of a frame built out of 2-in. steel tubing with wheels on the rear and an upside down T-bar for front support. The frame supports an industrial, Briggs and Stratton 3 hp motor and a tilt-up oak box with screens. The box is 6 in. deep, 36 in. wide and 48 in. long. Angle irons inside the box support the screens.

“The motor belt-drives a shaft with an off-set cam,” explains Snyder. “A bar with bearings at both ends is attached to the cam and to the screen. When I fire up the motor and engage the belt tightener, the box begins to shake.”

The unit is small enough to fit in a pickup.

The up-front T-bar doubles as a handle to pull the unit around.

Ease of transport allows Snyder to take his separator on-site rather than having to bring material home to be separated.

“I have used it for collecting trilobites,” he explains. “There are places out here where you can get really neat specimens. Rock shops sell small ones for as much as \$25. The shale they are found in is all broken up. It just falls through leaving the trilobites behind.”

Snyder also takes his unit to old dumpsites. He notes that old sodas would often be burned at such sites and coins or marbles lost in the seat would be left behind in the ashes. He simply shovels ash residue and dirt on his shaker screens and lets the machine do the rest.

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Motorized screening cart is small enough to fit in a pickup, allowing Snyder to take it on-site rather than having to bring material home to be separated.