

Low-Cost Aeration System Keeps Ice Off Ponds

You can set up a pond aeration system for less than \$100, says Christopher Potts of Ottawa, Ontario.

"Bottom aeration is one of the best things you can do for a pond," he says. "Releasing millions of tiny air bubbles delivers extra oxygen to the water, breaks up the temperature layers, and lifts and breaks up nutrients that would otherwise gather as muck in the basin. In addition, it will keep ice from forming in winter."

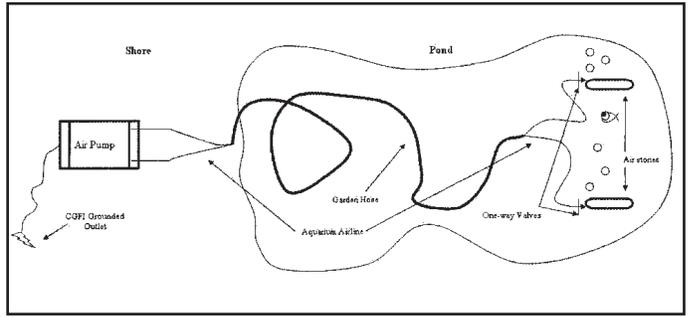
Commercial aeration systems cost hundreds or even thousands of dollars, but Potts says you can also get good quality aeration by making your own system with a few easily obtained materials.

Here's what you need: half-inch garden hose, plumber's goop or aquarium silicone, two 12-in. aquarium air stones, about 12 ft. of aquarium airline, a dual outlet air pump, a pair of one-way valves, a cover for the pump, several bricks, stones, or other heavy objects to weigh down the line along with duct tape or wire to attach them, and possibly an extension cord. The most expensive item will likely be the pump, which costs about \$20.

to the pond. I've used hoses as long as 200 ft. with no problems," he says. "The pump will put out enough bubbles through a 12-in. airstone to roil the surface of the pond, and this is more than adequate to keep ice off. This system will open approximately 30 sq. ft. if placed at a depth of 5 ft. The bigger the pump and airstones you use, the larger the surface area you can keep free of ice."

To build the system, Potts suggests you cut four, 6-in. pieces of aquarium airline, and then cut the remainder into two 5-ft. sections. Next, push a couple inches of the two 6-in. pieces into one end of the garden hose. Apply plumber's goop or aquarium silicone into the opening around the airlines, using caution that you don't use too much and block the airline ends. Push the other two pieces of 6-in. line onto the inlet side of the one-way valves. Insert the outlet side of these valves into the remaining two 5-ft. pieces of airline.

"Take the two 6-in. pieces with the valves and 5-ft. lengths of airline attached and insert, then silicone/goop them to the other end of the garden hose in the same fashion as the pieces that will be running out of the pump,"



Low-cost aeration system makes use of a 1/2-in. garden hose, two 12-in. aquarium air stones, 12 ft. of aquarium airline, an air pump, and a pair of one-way valves.

of the two 5-ft. airlines and then, to weigh down the hose, strap on some bricks or stones, spacing them out along its length by wrapping duct tape or wire around them.

"Place the whole contraption into the pond basin, making sure to position the air stones as far apart as possible. Also, leave enough airline/hose on the shore to reach your air pump, connecting the two 6-in. airlines and the rest of the airline contraption to it."

It can then be plugged into a grounded, CGFI outlet or an extension cord plugged into a grounded CGFI outlet.

Potts recommends interested readers check

out "Pond Boss" magazine. He is a regular contributor to the bulletin board on Pond Boss's website (www.pondboss.com) and encourages anyone who wishes to discuss aeration or any other pond-related issue to visit the site and its board, or call to get a copy of the magazine.

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Lee deVries uses this home-built, 3-pt. mounted dolly to put his fifth wheel trailer into storage. Dolly takes much of trailer's hitch weight off tractor's 3-pt. hitch.

Fifth Wheel Dolly Built From Salvaged Parts

Lee and Charlotte deVries, Scio, Oregon, enjoy taking long trips with their pickup and fifth-wheel trailer. But putting the trailer into storage was always tricky. The extended cab pickup and trailer together were so long, Lee couldn't get a straight shot at the door.

"My wife usually helps guide me into the building and we have to go back and forth several times before we get the trailer parked," he says.

"I thought it would be really nice if my 8N Ford could perform this task rather than the pickup," he says. Trouble was, the hitch weight of the 24-ft. trailer is considerably more than he could put on the old tractor's 3-point.

"I needed to come up with something that would carry the weight and still be maneuverable," he says.

When he heard a neighbor was scrapping out an old self-propelled Cockshutt swather, he bought the pivot wheel and the V-frame, which is made of 2 1/2 by 5 1/2-in. channel on one side of the "V" and 3 by 6-in. channel on the other side. He cut the V-frame off 48 in. in front of the pivot wheel. Then he added vertical supports on the front — at the two ends of the V - and attached mountings made of 1 1/2 by 3-in. channel iron so it would couple to the 8N's 3-pt. hitch. He also added bracing from the vertical supports back to the V frame to steady them, and attached 1 1/2

by 2-in. angle iron legs to support the front end so he can unhook or hook up easily. These swing up and lock out of the way when in use.

He bolted a length of 3 by 6-in. channel iron (left over when he cut off the V-frame) on top of the frame about halfway between the pivot wheel and the 3-pt. hitch. In the center of this, he welded a 3-in. length of 3-in. inside diameter steel tubing. This makes a receiver for the trailer hitch pin.

Now, all he has to do is unhook the trailer from the pickup, back his fifth wheel dolly into place and lower the trailer hitch into the tube. Because the 8N is shorter, more maneuverable, and allows him a better view while backing up, parking the trailer in the shed is no longer a despised chore. "For safety sake, I recommend using a stabilizer bar on at least one side of the 3-pt. hitch, especially if you're on a slope," he adds.

"I think several brands of swathers could provide the basic components for one of these," he says. He says making the dolly cost under \$100 and took very little time, yet it saves him a good deal of time and frustration each time he uses it.

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Town Sells Water Tower on eBay

The city of Sublimity, Oregon sold their 55-year-old, 120-ft. water tower on the internet auction site, "eBay." The successful bid was \$212.50 from Michael Duhrkoop of Estacada, Oregon.

The sale benefited the rural town in two ways: It's no longer responsible for dismantling the old tower, which could have cost as much as \$20,000. The second benefit is that the city coffers are now \$212.50 richer.

Even if Duhrkoop doesn't follow through on the deal, the publicity generated by the eBay auction has brought forward a lot of other individuals who are interested in dealing on the tower.

"One of the parties interested in the tower is a farm antique museum," says Williams.

The 50,000-gal. water tower attracted 60 bids in March, with Duhrkoop bidding eight times by the time bidding closed.

Duhrkoop told FARM SHOW he bought the water tower to put on a friend's 200-acre tree farm. However, at press time he had not yet paid the city for the tower.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, City of Sublimity, Attention: Josh Williams, councilor, Box 146, Sublimity, Oregon 97385 (ph 503 769-5475; email: training@firehousemail.com).

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