



**Matt Studer, New Washington, Ohio:** "Have you ever wondered what to do with that old gas grill that has rusted out? Instead of taking it to the landfill or turning it into scrap iron, why not make yourself a rolling tool cart. That's what I did. I removed the grill section and screwed a 24 by 36-in. piece of plywood to the frame. It works great around the shop, holding tools or parts wherever I'm working."

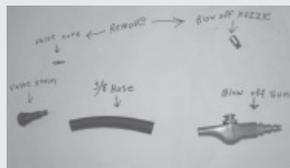
**Mark Eilers, Tower Hill, Ill.:** The steel roof on Mark Eilers' farm shop leaks over his workbench. It only happens when the wind's coming from a certain direction. "It's not worth fixing because it doesn't happen



too often but it's annoying when it does. To eliminate the problem with a minimum amount of work, I stretched a sheet of lightweight plastic tarp under the rafters in such a way that water dripping through is directed over to the edge of the wall."

**Dennis Martin, Live Oak, Fla.:** "I use aluminum conduit to make replacement handles for shovels and post hole diggers. I've also used stainless steel 1/2 in. dia. pipe to make a handle for a garden rake, putting a hoe on the other end so I've got two units in one. In addition, I made a good hoe by attaching half of a coultter blade to a piece of pipe."

**Edwin Burtness, Orfordville, Wis.:** "It's often frustrating to try to get newly mounted tires to hold air because of small gaps between the tire bead and rim. You can't get enough air in through the valve stem to seat the bead. I solved the problem by removing the valve stem core and using a 3/8-in. hose



and blow-off gun with the safety tip removed, allowing a larger volume of air to enter the tire. When the tire seats on the rim the valve core can be replaced, and then the tire is aired up normally."

**Dennis McCarville, Two Harbors, Minn.:** "Here's a foolproof rust removing idea I discovered after many years of experience. If you have a part that is rusty or seriously corroded, simply soak it in water. Water is the best corrosion remover in the world, and it's free. I have dug up old pliers and old crescent wrenches which were hardly identifiable. After soaking them in water for an extended period of time, I was able to free them up and now use them as daily tools. Water always works."

"Also, water is the best metal and drill bit cooler there is. Don't use oil. Water keeps the contact points cool and increases the cutting power of the bit. It's also a lot less messy to use."

**Editor's Note: We were skeptical about McCarville's idea of using water to remove rust so we decided to test it out. We put a bunch of badly rusty nails and fence staples in a can of water and let them sit. A couple hours later, we checked and nothing had happened. So we let it sit for about three days. At the end of that time, most of the rust had fallen off and the rest came off with a gentle wipe of a paper towel. The nails and staples were totally cleaned.**

**Marvin Wells, Spencerville, Ind.:** "If you have trouble keeping your chuck key handy for a drill, just take a speaker magnet out of an old radio and stick it to the side of the drill (must have a metal casing). Then stick the chuck key to that. I've used this idea for

## Self-Tightening "Pocketwrench"

"It'll grab onto fasteners that standard wrenches can't handle," says Don Burke, BurkTek Inc., Kansas City, Mo.

Made from high carbon stainless steel, the Pocketwrench II measures 4 in. long by 1 in. wide by 1/8 in. thick and weighs just 2 oz. It comes with a V-shaped opening at one end that has a variable pitch tooth design, allowing the tool to grip almost anything including hex and square heads, and in both inch and metric sizes. To reverse the direction of the rotation you simply turn the tool over.

"The tool's design allows you to easily grip irregular shaped fasteners, and even use it on round fasteners like socket head cap screws. There are probably 50 different objects you can use this tool on, everything from allen heads to torque bits to regular or Phillips screws," says Burke. "It works almost like a pipewrench with its ability to grip things, but is quicker and easier to use. The teeth become smaller as the opening gets narrower, which allows them to keep a constant grip."

A 1/4-in. socket at the end of the tool lets you insert screwdriver bits.

One end of the tool tapers off at an angle, allowing it to be used as a variable width, straight blade screwdriver or as a mini prybar.



**V-shaped opening at one end of tool has a variable pitch tooth design, allowing tool to grip almost anything.**

"It works great as a mini prybar for opening paint cans, stubborn windows, and so forth," says Burke.

The tool also has a laser-engraved inch and metric ruler for measuring fasteners and other small items.

Sells for \$15 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, BurkTek Inc., P.O. Box 10736, Kansas City, Mo. 64188 (ph 800 700-6784; info@pocketwrenchtool.com; www.pocketwrenchtool.com).

# FARM SHOW®

## Money-Saving Repairs & Maintenance Shortcuts

*Have you come up with any unusual money-saving repair methods for fixing farm equipment? What maintenance shortcuts have you found? Have you had any equipment recalled by the factory? Name a particularly tough mechanical problem you've had with a piece of equipment and how you solved it. These are a few of the questions we asked randomly selected FARM SHOW readers. If you have a repair tip, maintenance shortcut, or other mechanical experience you'd like to share, send details to: FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.*

Mark Newhall, Editor

10 years. It'll work anywhere else you have to keep track of a small metal part or a key."



**TP Tools, 7075 State Rt. 446, Canfield, Ohio 44406 (ph 800 321-9260; www.tptools.com):** They make a wall-mounted Spark Plug Cleaner that works like a mini sandblaster. It measures 6 1/2 in. high by 3 1/2 in. wide and comes with a cloth bag that holds 3/4 lb. of abrasive material.

The operator connects an air hose to the bottom of the cleaner, then inserts the spark plug into an opening on top that's equipped with a rubber grommet that holds it there. Then he sets the control lever to "blast", pushes an air button, and manually rotates the plug for 5 to 10 seconds. Then he sets the control lever to "air" to blow the plug clean.

The abrasive is contained inside the bag so there's no mess. Accepts many different plug sizes. Requires a compressor with at least 90 psi.

The cleaner sells for \$25 plus S&H. The cloth bag sells for \$3.95 plus S&H; one pint of abrasive sells for \$5.95 plus S&H.

**Zachary Vahlkamp, Oakdale, Ill.:** "I own two older Grasshopper riding mowers that are simple, reliable and easy to maintain. However, I had a problem keeping the deck drive belts, especially the rear belt, from falling off the pulleys. The tensioning pulley is flat and doesn't have any grooves for the belts to ride in, making it easy for a foreign object to nudge the rear belt off.

"I tried to shim the pulley to center the belts, and I also replaced the belts, idler spring, and bushings in the idler arm. I even added a grease fitting to the idler arm in order to avoid premature wear, but nothing helped. The rear belt still occasionally jumped off the pulley.

"One day I looked at a newer Grasshopper 7210 riding mower and noticed they had

changed the tensioning pulley to a double-grooved pulley with the drive and driven pulleys on the same belt. So I bought a double-grooved pulley and mounted it on my mower. It fit with very little modification, just some 'shimming' using machinery bushings I had laying around. I kept the mower's original belts, bolt, and idler arm. Three years later the mower still works good and the belts have never jumped off.

"I've worked on farm and construction equipment for more than 10 years and have noticed that people tend to bend the parking lock linkage on IH 06, 56, and 66 series tractors. Tisco makes a spring-loaded replacement linkage that can solve this problem. The original linkage bends if the operator forces the handle down when the park latch is on top of the gear tooth. With the Tisco linkage system the operator can pull the park lever up and, if the park latch is on top of a gear tooth, it simply compresses a spring. If the tractor rolls slightly, the spring forces the park latch into place when everything lines up. I've installed at least 30 of these systems with no complaints from my customers."

**John Stava, Bloomington, Ind.:** "Here's an easy way to preserve paint and paint brushes. Get a lidded bucket - one with a good seal like a kitty litter bucket. Soak some cardboard with paint thinner or mineral spirits and line the bucket with it. Cut holes on each side of the bucket below the top edge and run a rod through the bucket. Clean your paint brushes in the normal way and put a rubber band on the brushes a little above the end of the bristle. Then hang the brushes on the rod inside the bucket and seal the lid. The bristles will absorb the fluid from the cardboard, which keeps them clean and straight. Periodically resoak the cardboard with the paint thinner or mineral spirits. The size of the bucket depends on the number of paint brushes."

**Scott Elias, Standard, Alberta:** "To remove seized bolts or fittings from a casting such as a cylinder head, I just use a little heat and wax. I heat the area around the bolt and the bolt itself, then apply some wax (a small birthday candle works good) around where the bolt screws in. The wax will work its way down into the threads and then the bolt will easily come out.

"I've used this method many times with