

# Shipping Container Fitted With Easy-Access Doors

At the recent Farm Fest show near Redwood Falls, Minn., Schweiss Bi-Fold Doors showed how shipping containers can be converted to “easy access” storage units.

The side and end of a standard container are equipped with large one-piece hydraulic-opened doors. The doors have the added benefit of providing a shaded area when opened.

Mike Schweiss, CEO of Schweiss Bi-Fold Doors, says, “The beauty of this idea is that the large side door opens up the entire container, making it much easier to access contents.

“I think it would be perfect for a number of uses such as a portable shed, workshop, mobile office, storage for farm seed and chemicals, and hunting shacks. This is our first project, but we plan to do more and are willing to custom build doors to the customer’s needs. For example, the containers can be designed with a small room at one end that can be used as a small office. The interior of the container can be equipped with a speaker system and LED lighting.”

Schweiss bought the container on display 1 1/2 years ago for \$5,500. He also added 1 1/2 in. of insulation coated with 3/8 in. of corrugated plastic, giving an R-value of 14 to the container walls.

He says the company can buy containers and retrofit them in their shop, or customers can buy their own container and then buy a kit and do the work themselves.



At a recent farm show, Schweiss Bi-Fold Doors showed how the side and end of a standard shipping container can be equipped with large one-piece, hydraulic-opened doors. “It opens up the entire container, making it much easier to access contents,” says Mike Schweiss.

The doors are constructed with 2-in. sq. steel tubing with a built-in truss system for added strength. The big side door requires a lot of lifting power so Schweiss uses strong, specially made cylinders that are activated by a ball screw actuator and motor, giving each cylinder a lifting power of 5,000 lbs.

“When I retrofitted the container that’s on

display at shows, I discovered its top couldn’t support the weight of the side door and caved in somewhat so I had to prop it up,” says Schweiss.

Schweiss says one idea down the road is to use a pair of forklifts to load the container onto a flatbed semi truck, allowing farmers to drive to the field with their water tanks and

chemicals, etc. “When you get to the field or job site you would just open the hydraulic door and take out what you need,” he says.

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## He Customizes Shipping Containers For Any Need

Joe Hamilton modifies shipping containers into simple storage units for equipment, grain and more, as well as for cabins, offices and workshops. While he started as a reseller of minimally modified containers, he now sells, rents and customizes new and used containers throughout Canada and across the U.S.

“We once did one for use as an oil and water separator for a tailings pond at a mine,” says Hamilton. “It was completely explosion proof with vents and fans, as well as leakproof with a spill tray in the bottom. The invoice for it was close to \$300,000.”

Most of the containers Hamilton modifies are considerably simpler, often just adding a second door. A container with a roll-up door, in addition to the standard opening, sells for \$4,400 (Canadian).

End uses are even more diverse than the containers themselves. Lengths can vary from 10 to 53 ft., yet all meet the same

international, seagoing shipping standards.

The common construction to those standards is what makes the containers so versatile. Hamilton used them when he was a lumber broker selling to Europe and Asia. When he ran across some units modified with doors, he started reselling them, eventually customizing containers himself.

“I bought a welder and a torch and went to work,” he recalls.

Common modifications include doors, windows, skylights and insulation. Electrical wiring, plumbing, heating and air conditioning can be added as needed.

One thing that makes containers so popular is the ability to move them from place to place. With everything contained, moving is as easy as unplugging electricity, water and other services, picking it up and going. Meanwhile they can be multi-purpose and self-contained.



Joe Hamilton modifies shipping containers for a wide variety of needs. Photos show a container converted into a remote office with lighting, plumbing, windows and heat added.



“A big excavation company wanted a worksite coffee shop with its own power source for use at remote locations,” says Hamilton. “They also needed to be able to plug in engine heaters at night in the winter.”

While most of the container was set up for employee breaks, a section was set aside to serve as a huge battery storage unit. Before they left for the night, workers could plug in all of their equipment. The next day, the

battery could be recharged with the generator that powered the break room.

“We take pride in customizing a container the way you want it,” says Hamilton. “While others sell what they have, we custom build.”

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## Handy “Quick String” Cutter And Dispenser

There’s no need to hunt for scissors or knives when using this handy new Quick String™ dispenser.

The 5-in. high, 4 1/4-in. dia. plastic dispenser lets you quickly and safely cut twine, string, ribbon or yarn with one hand. It’s equipped with a hinged lid with a hole in it and a safety blade on one side. To cut the twine, just pull it across the safety blade.

The twine ball has to be less than 4 in. high and 4 1/4 in. wide to fit into the dispenser. Attachments let you clip the dispenser to your belt or hang it on a wall.

“It’s really handy to use because you can pull out a piece of twine and cut it with one hand,” says Trudy Walker, Quick Industries, Inc., Weedsport, N.Y. “Most twines, strings, and plastic tying ribbons can be fed through

the loop and cut without tangling. And since the blade is safe for children, the whole family can work together on projects. Tying balloons, wrapping presents, or doing jobs around the farm can be done in a fraction of the time.”

Walker says the Quick String works great for jobs such as staking and tying flowers, grape vines or tomato plants and vegetables in need of support. “You can hold the plant with one hand and get a piece of twine with the other,” she says. “Quick String also works to tie up recyclables such as twigs, dried flowers, newspapers, and folded cardboard.”

The Quick String dispenser sells for \$15.95 plus S&H. Or, the website offers 2 dispensers with 6 rolls containing 250 ft. of natural Jute twine, for \$45.50 shipping included.



Plastic dispenser lets you pull out a piece of twine and cut it with one hand.

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9220; trudy@leonardimg.com; www.quickstring.com).