

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

backhoe to operate it. Then when I want to move ahead I have to get back on the tractor. Last winter I used the tractor to operate a 3-pt. mounted wood splitter. I also use it to pull a 6-ft. disk, and I plan to use it to pull a single bottom moldboard plow. The tractor has more than 1,000 hours on it with no problems, although the engine does stall once in a while if I work it too hard.

"The company provides adequate service and ships parts out UPS. One time when the breather hose on the fuel injector leaked, I called the company and had a new hose within a week. Everything on the tractor is metric, which is one thing I don't like."

Carl Wyss, Washington, Ill.: Carl's impressed with a couple of repair products called **Shoe Goop** and **Shoe Goo**. Both are made by Eclectic Products Inc. and are available at K-Mart and Walmart. Or you can call the company at 888 847-0770.

"I've used these products for years to fix shoes, suitcases, garment bags, work clothes, cracked bands on wrist watches, pants, belts, rubber cultivator wheels, and cuts on tractor tires," says Wyss. "The two products are quite similar although Shoe Goop is a little more liquid and is therefore more versatile."

"Shoe Goo bonds to leather, rubber, and canvas and is strong enough for gym and sports shoes. It can be used to seal rubber boots and waders.

"A few years ago I used Shoe Goop to repair cracks in the press wheels on my corn and soybean planter. I think the area I repaired will last longer than the original rubber. I went through 10 or 15 tubes, but I still don't think I spent as much money as it would've cost to buy even one press wheel. Both products sell for about \$4 a tube."

Joe C. Dunne, Maquoketa, Iowa: A 1972 **Ford 7000** tractor equipped with a diesel engine rates as Joe's "best buy". "I bought it

in 1973 as a demonstrator model with a little more than 400 hours on it. Today it has about 13,700 hours. I've replaced a fuel pump, clutch, head gasket, and four sets of tires. The rest of the tractor is just as it came from the factory, including the fuel injector pump and the injectors."

Lynn Simonsen, Sleepy Eye, Minn.: Lynn likes his 1994 **Ford F-150 4-WD** pickup equipped with a 302 cu. in., V-8 engine and automatic transmission. "I bought it used with about 35,000 miles on it. Now it has more than 102,000 miles and is still going strong. It gets about 16 mpg. I replaced the radiator at about 100,000 miles."

Russ Anderson, Covington, La.: Russ says two products have "tremendously reduced" battery maintenance in his cars, truck and tractor. The first one is **Battery Mat** made by the Battery Mat Corp. in Winchester, Va. "It's a felted pad that you put under the battery in the vehicle's battery tray. The mat is impregnated with chemicals which trap and neutralize battery acid. The mat prevents acid from eating under the battery and around the sides. You can find them on the internet at www.batterymaintenance.com or call 800 362-5397."

The second product is **Permatex Battery Protector**, an aerosol that you spray onto battery terminals after the cables are connected. It provides protection from corrosion and chemical build-up on the terminals. "I've used this product for more than a year on every vehicle and implement I own that has a battery. Most of the connections are still as clean and bright as the day they were made. The product can be found in many auto supply stores," says Anderson.

Robert C. Peckham, Woodstock, Ct.: "In 1988 we bought a 1979 **International 2554** truck equipped with a diesel engine and two new **Delco** batteries. The batteries are still

going strong which I think is fantastic."

John Scott, Joyceville, Ontario: "Our 1994 **Mira Fount** energy-free water tank is a best buy. It's an insulated tank equipped with large balls that cattle push down to drink. An underground line runs from our house to the water tank, and the warmth from the well water keeps the water from freezing. We had a colder than normal winter but this water tank never froze up. We like not having to spend money on electricity.

"Our **Empyre** outdoor wood burning furnace is a best buy (Cozeburn Mfg., Manitoba, Canada). We've used it for three years to heat our 80-year-old limestone house. We bought it because we got tired of paying high oil bills. There may be other, more high tech outdoor

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furnaces on the market, but with the exchange rate as high as it is, this Canadian-built furnace was the right price. All we do is put wood in it, clean out the ashes, and occasionally top the water level. It has been absolutely trouble-free."

Mike Johnson, Montrose, Colo.: Mike says his **Coleman** Charger rechargeable flashlight is his "best buy". He uses both a 90 and a 60 model. "I keep one of these lights plugged in at all times in our living room, master bedroom, shop, and barn. They're always ready to provide up to two hours of bright, continuous light. The 60 model is smaller but has all the 90 model's features except it has a smaller beam and slightly shorter run-time. A couple of my Coleman

flashlights are more than five years old but are still going strong. The newest one was added to our barn just a few months ago."

On the negative side, he lists his **Ryobi** reciprocating saw. "I was using it with a 9-in. blade to cut off the top of a 6 by 6 treated barn pole when the saw started smoking and then quit working. I think it should have had an overload protection device of some kind."

Russell E. Berg, Mt. Horeb, Wis.: "Our 2001 **Pacific Western** outdoor stainless steel wood burning furnace is our worst buy. It came with a 20-year limited warranty. Last October, several small holes developed in the bottom of the furnace, allowing water inside it to leak out. We contacted the company and were told they had gone bankrupt. The next time we called they said the owner had sold out. The next time they said he had retired. The bottom line is, the company won't honor the warranty so we have to fix any problems at our own expense.

"We paid a premium for this so-called 'top quality' stainless steel furnace, but now we're stuck and have to look for another furnace. Interestingly, the name Pacific Western is still in use. The company say it's 'not the same company', yet they're still making furnaces that have the same name. We told the Consumer Protection Agency of Wisconsin about this company. I'd be cautious about dealing with them and view their 'warranty' as suspect."

Martin Pohlman, Caledonia, Minn.: "My 1979 **Ford F-100** pickup equipped with a 300 cu. in., 6-cyl. engine is my best buy. It has about 215,000 miles on it but still doesn't use any oil. It has been a really tough and reliable pickup, and it still gets about 16 mpg. I'd definitely buy one of these old beauties again."

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