

James W. Campbell, Lawrenceburg, Tenn.: "My Milwaukee 1/2-in. cordless impact wrench saves time compared to using an air-operated tool. I just squeeze the trigger and go. It's one of my favorite tools."

LeRoy Neepser, Medina, N.Y.: He's the owner of a 2019 GM Sierra 1500 SLT crewcab pickup. "It's a very comfortable vehicle that gets exceptional fuel economy, and it pulls trailers quite well. My wife loves this pickup."

John Heins, Fairborn, Ohio: John's happy with his 2019 Sure-Trac dump trailer (www.sure-trac.com; ph 800 372-1755). "It has a 5 by 10-ft. bed which at times is bigger than what I need, and at other times is too small. I used lumber to build up the sides and front, allowing me to haul larger loads of brush and other big items. I left space between the home-built side boards for straps. My family likes this dump trailer and seems to use it more than I do."

"The only negative is the long safety brake cable. If it isn't wrapped around something it can catch on an object as I'm driving down the highway, and when that happens the trailer brakes are immediately activated."

David Gates, Columbus, Ind.: "My 2012 Honda CRV has more than 106,000 miles on it, but has needed only a new battery and a new set of brake shoes. It has all wheel drive and handles amazingly well on wet roads and in snow. It averages about 28 mpg."

"The batteries on my Sears Craftsman cordless drill don't stay charged and run down even when they're not being used. Then they don't charge up very well and won't run the drill for any length of time."

Bernard Wielenberg, Grey Eagle, Minn.: "The 2018 Klutch 60-amp plasma cutter I bought at Northern Tool is my best buy. The first time I used it was to cut a 24-in. dia. circle out of 3/4-in. thick steel. It cut like a hot knife through butter about 3/4 of the way around. Then I checked the nozzle and found it was worn out, so I put on a new nozzle and it cut perfect again. I've used this tool on lighter 1/4 to 1/2-in. thick metal, and it made perfect cuts with almost no grinding."

"The cutter came with six extra nozzles and when I was down to the last one I went to a Northern Tool store, but was told they don't carry nozzles for this tool. I called the company but was told they didn't have any nozzles in stock, and would have to order them. They said it would take 2 months for the nozzles to arrive. That was a year ago last August and nothing has happened. I've called them several times but my order kept getting delayed. I called again last June to ask about the order and was put on hold for about 8 min. Finally they came back on the phone and said the nozzles should arrive by August. It looks like I've got an expensive shop ornament. This will be my last purchase from Northern Tool."

Joseph E. Stoltzfus, Rockville, Ind.: "This past summer I decided to try the 1/2-in. wide electrical flat-style fencing that makes a very neat looking goat or horse fence. The problem was figuring out how to attach the flat tape to my 5-ft. tall, 7/8-in. dia. poly posts without spending a lot of money on insulators. The posts have holes every 2 in. so I got the idea of using plastic zip ties to hold the electrical tape. I bought 100 or so 8-in. ties for about \$11 and guess what? They worked just great, holding the electrical tape flat against the poles but not so tight that it couldn't be pulled through if we need to. They also work well for wire. I pull the tie over the tape or wire and then over and back again using the same hole, and then through the zip lock, which holds tight. Quick to apply, works good, and is cheap."

Robert Conklin, Corydon, Ind.: "In 2000 I bought a new Ford Taurus. I sold it to my daughter in 2010 when it had 100,000 miles on it. The car now has 220,000 miles on it and the engine and transmission have never been touched."

Robert Stone, Seymour, Mo.: "My Stihl 041, 028, and MS170 chainsaws have worked well through the years. Very happy with Stihl."

"Last fall I bought a new Mahindra 2638 tractor with a loader and bucket. It's a nice rig, although on occasion it pops out of mid-range into neutral going down a grade. Not safe. Also, there is no way to set a preset depth on the 3-pt. hitch like on my 1973 Massey 135 diesel, which is still going strong. I recently replaced the injector pump on the Massey because, like a lot of us older folks, it leaked a little."

William G. Kiste, Winamac, Ind.: "I bought a heavy-duty live trap from Daniel Yoder, Country Side Repair after reading about it in FARM SHOW (S341-B Little Ridge Rd, Ontario, Wis. 54651 or leave message at 608 606-1628). I was having a problem with critters taking the bait but not triggering the trap. I called and he told me how to fix the problem and then returned half the shipping fee. So far I've caught 2 raccoons and 2 possums. Can't recommend this trap highly enough."

Alex Thomson, Woodbury, Ct.: "In 1973 I bought a Blackhawk basic mechanic's hand tool set made by New Britain Machine in New Britain, Conn. The company that has made tools for many other companies over the years. I still use the 3/8-in. ratchet nearly every day. Only a couple of the tools have been replaced due to breakage or wear. Quality hand tools may be more expensive up front but they will last forever and are therefore less expensive in the long run. Buying American-made tools is the way to go, if you can find them."

"A used Deere 630 mower/conditioner I bought 4 years ago replaced a Deere 1360 that I had for more than 10 years. The Deere-built cutterbar on this model is extremely well-built and should last forever. Although I think fluted rollers would offer faster dry-down than the impeller model that I have, I'm pleased overall. I can mow over previously cut windrows without dragging any hay, unlike with 'red machines' owned by some of my friends, who have also reported the need to replace pto shafts after several seasons. The one thing I don't like about this machine is the geometry of the drawbar. The offset bend makes left hand turns difficult, even requiring that the machine be partially opened up to the field position when making sharp left hand turns on the road. That makes the hydraulic swing lock-out safety valve useless."

"I have always had good luck with Milwaukee brand corded electric tools. I still use a 7/4-in. circular saw and a 3/8-in. drill that I have had for nearly 30 years. I also have a hammer drill, sawzall, and a 1/2-in. VSR drill that have given excellent service over the years. I have several of their 18-volt battery drills and they work well, too. The compact batteries last a long time and they charge quickly. How sad, though, that Milwaukee is no longer an American-owned company. At least the tools are still built in the U.S."

Ricky Hatcher, Shady Grove, Fla.: "I am a diesel mechanic and my best buy is a Power Probe 3EZ circuit tester (www.amazon.com or call 800 655-3585). It makes electrical diagnosis on lights and any DC circuit a breeze. I use it more than my multi-meter. You can see if you have power or ground simply by probing wires or touching the end to connectors. You can also ground or power up a device with the circuit-protected switch."

Battery-Operated Winch

Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.: "The 82W1 battery-powered winch from Greenworks Commercial is a time saver and a tree saver. It could even be a life saver. The portable capstan winch is quick to set up wherever it is needed. In a straight-line operation, the 3-speed, 1.0 kW motor offers 2,200 lbs. of pulling power. Add a pulley or two and the power is multiplied."

"The 82-volt Greenworks winch is available by itself, with batteries or in a kit. I have the kit, which includes a transport bag, a 3/8-in. by 164-ft. double-braid poly rope, a 3-in. pulley and carabiners and polyester slings for anchoring the winch and the pulley. Everything, including 2 batteries and a charger, fits inside the nylon carryall bag."

"One of the great things about the capstan winch is you are standing away from the towline, should it snap. The length of rope used is not dependent on the size of the drum. I can use the full length of my tow rope, as long as I have enough at the winch for 4 turns around the capstan and a short length to tug on."

"I put the winch to work in the woods, using it to pull logs up and into place on an access road. In the past I've used a variety of log chain and loader techniques when logging select trees out of a stand. Some have been less than safe, while others have damaged neighboring trees. All have been limited by how much chain I had and if a straight pull was possible."

"This summer and fall I put the Greenworks portable winch to work in my 60-acre, steep slope woodlot. It gave me complete control to move logs exactly where I wanted them without endangering trees left behind. By selecting my anchor tree as well as a tree (or trees) for connecting pulleys, I directed the log as desired. Redirecting the log is a matter of moving an anchor strap to another point."

"The winch really earned its way when I was cutting a large pine on a steep slope. Usually I can drop a tree within a few degrees of where I want it to fall. I carefully made my notch cut. As I made my felling cut, the tree settled the wrong way, pinching the chainsaw bar."

Jim Lacey, Dell Rapids, S.Dak.: "A product I've been using lately is XP-3 fuel treatment which is available for both diesel and gas. Our family's new 2-WD Suburban averaged 23 to 24 mpg on a recent road trip. My 2016 Dodge Cummins 1-ton 4-WD dually gets 12 1/2 mpg in regular use. What's more is that I was told XP-3 is supposed to extend oil life. With 12,500 miles on our oil recently, I changed it but then checked it on my Lubricheck oil tester and it still had 25 percent life left so I could have left it in."



Battery-powered capstan winch has 2,200 lbs. of pulling power.

"Instead of pounding in wedges or other gambits, I put the winch to use. Even tying the tow rope at shoulder height gave me enough leverage with the powerful winch. I pulled the tree back about 15 degrees and left it under tension. I removed my chainsaw and finished the cut, confident (this time) where the tree would fall."

"The next time I have any doubt about a tree, the rope will go on first. It will make working solo in the woods a little safer."

"I haven't had to use the winch to pull any machinery as yet. However, I can think of multiple times it would have been handy, such as when an unhitched rough-cut mower slipped between multiple trees to lodge 30 ft. down a steep slope. Pulling it out meant a straight line to a field road at a right angle. After many short tugs by a tractor with limited space to move, interspersed with reattaching the log chain with every tug, it was out."

"A powered winch on the tractor or another vehicle would have handled the mower. However, the versatility of the battery-powered winch would have made it easy. Anchor it for the best pull, wrap the rope around the capstan and give it a tug. The winch does the rest."

"The winch (tool only) is priced at \$849.99, while the kit is priced at \$999.99. Batteries are extra. It is available from dealers or at www.greenworkscommercial.com/shop-by-tool."



Ernie Rusack, Coventry, Rhode Island: "If you've got arthritis or stiffness in your joints, there's a less expensive way to get relief than buying expensive creams and pills at the drugstore. I'm 85 years old and use the same products on myself that we've always used on our mules, donkeys and Haflinger horses. **Mineral Ice** from Mane 'N Tail can be purchased in a 16-oz. bottle and sells for about \$12. It works just great for aches and pains. Some people don't like the menthol odor but it doesn't bother me. **Veterinary Linament Gel** from Absorbine, which comes in a 12-oz. bottle for about \$12, is the other product that also works well. It has a spearmint odor but is not as strong or noticeable as Mineral Ice. I buy both of these great products at our local feed store although you can also order them on Amazon. Works for me!"

"It gets the job done in about half the time."

Roy Monzo, Clare, Mich.: "My best buys are my Greenworks 16-in. chainsaw and 10-ft. pole saw. Both run off 40-amp batteries. They're easy to use, have very sharp blades, and are reasonably priced."

"Another best buy is my Toro TimeCutter MX 24.5 hp. zero-turn mower with a 'My Ride' comfort seat. It gets the job done in about half the time and with a much smoother ride thanks to the suspension seat. A very enjoyable machine to operate."