

through numerous boat floors, and cut tons of steel. I've replaced the power cord twice, but the little machine keeps on ticking away. By far my 'best buy'.

"My 2014 **Chevy Silverado 1/2-ton** has 120,000 miles with only a front-end alignment, tires, regular oil changes, and routine maintenance. It's a great product."



Ray Williams, Toledo, Ohio.: "My **Generac 3200 psi** pressure washer always starts on the first or second pull. I get about 4 hrs. of runtime to a tank of gas, and I have used it for about 100 hrs. to wash the house, concrete, vehicles, and about anything else that needed a deep clean. It also works great for removing loose paint."

Merrill Frus, Creston, Iowa: Merrill likes the **Westendorf Freedom Mount 550 tractor loader** he purchased in 1999. "It's well-built and easy to mount and dismount. It will withstand many years of hard use. I think it will outlast Case IH loaders."

Neil Gaarder, Elk River, Minn.: "The **LockNLube grease coupler** works very well although there are a few times when a standard zerk fitting grease coupler is better so it's a good idea to have a spare grease gun with a standard coupler handy."



Patrick Phillips, West Lafayette, Ind.: A **MR COOL 24kBTU** heat pump is a "best buy" for Patrick (www.northerntool.com). "This do-it-yourself heat pump is great in my detached garage workshop. It's easy to install, runs silently, and cools my 24 by 48-ft. shop to 76 degrees even in 95 degree heat. Not just A/C, it also makes heat in the spring and fall. Runs very efficiently. It's way better than a window A/C unit. A must have product."

"The **Milwaukee M18** backpack sprayer has a bad design so there is always leftover spray. The replacement seals and O-Rings are not available, so once it starts to drip (mine leaked after one year) you have to throw away the tank and wand and buy a new one. For \$400, you would expect to get a product that could be repaired. If you want a junk sprayer, get a cheaper one not a \$400 junk sprayer."

Larry McCullough, Sycamore, Penn.: "The **Wallenstein log splitter** with log lift makes log splitting almost fun. It will lift logs you can hardly roll. It splits anything, even knots. It's a great machine (www.wallensteinequipment.com)."

Harold R. Keller, Glouster, Ohio.: "A while back, someone recommended **Irish Spring** soap to repel mice in seldom used truck cabs, so I tried it. This spring I checked in a truck cab, and it was full of mice droppings. The mice had eaten both ends off two cakes of the soap. They must have been pretty hungry."

Vince Rocco, McPherson, Kan.: "Stihl power equipment and a **Deere** skid loader and **Compact 990** tractor have been very reliable."

"I have gone through four **Campbell** frost-free yard hydrants in three years. The packing seals keep failing. The company sent replacements once. These are a plastic material that even break while being handled. To get to the packing nut, the hydrant needs to be dug up and taken apart. These are not worth the money or time to buy and install."

"These are not worth the money or time to buy and install."

Robert Growcock, Wolcottville, Ind.: "My 'best buys' over the years have been **Allis-Chalmers WD and WD45 tractors** and a **2006 GMC 1-ton** with 152,000 miles on it."

Jeff Harris, Madison, Fla.: "My **John Deere 4020** bought in October 1970 is still running strong."

Melvin Lapp, Meyerstown, Penn.: "My **Wheel Horse 252-H** tractor gets the job done no matter how heavy the load. It can pull a 6 1/2-ft. by 14-ft. flatbed trailer loaded with mulch."

On the negative side is his **NorthStar 37-ton** log splitter. "The first day I used it, the oil filter started leaking. We put a new one on and haven't had a problem with it since."

Arvin G. Reu, Luverne, Minn.: "Our **Ferris zero-turn** lawn mower has a smooth ride, clean cut, and cuts mowing time by a third."

Duane Riddle, Argos, Ind.: "In March of 2013, I bought a new **Polaris Ranger 500** crew cab. It now has 540 hrs. and 3,600 miles on it with an average speed of 6.75 mph. I only use it to check on cows and move them to a new pasture."

"In late Feb. 2020 it developed a severe vibration above 20 mph. The dealer diagnosed it as the transmission needing replacement, which we did at a cost of almost \$3,000. To this day, they haven't told me what happened or why. On top of this, they kept the transmission so I couldn't even have another mechanic look at it."

"About a year later the engine locked up. It seems a rod snapped and poked holes in the crankcase, ruining the bottom of the engine. **Polaris** doesn't even sell new engines for this, so we had to rebuild it with new parts. We replaced everything below the head at a cost of about \$5,000. There must be a serious problem with these engines if they won't even sell you a new one."

"To date I've spent about \$14.80 per machine hour just on repairs. That's more than I've spent on any of my 12 tractors. This is an insanely high cost for something that doesn't do any work. It just putters around the farm checking cows."

"I am over 60 years old and been farming my whole life. Owning this **Polaris Ranger** has been the most frustrating experience of my career."

"Best Buy" Lumber Kiln



The **iDry 2.0 Vacuum Kiln** can hold up to 2,000 board feet.

J.R. Manske, Stoddard, Wis.: "I bought a new **iDry 2.0 Vacuum Kiln** for my woodworking business. It was a lot more money than a dehumidifier kiln, but it was a good purchase and provides many advantages compared to traditional kilns."

"By using vacuum, the boiling point of the water in the wood is lowered, enabling a lower heat to achieve the same level of dryness. That eliminates the high temperature reduces stress, checking and cracking. It also allows thicker lumber to be accommodated."

"I bought a **Woodmizer LT 40 sawmill** 4 years ago to saw out lumber for my furniture building and custom work for other hobbyists and homeowners. It's an awesome machine, and I was using it to saw out big live edge slabs. I was selling them green, but people didn't know how to air dry them. When they used them in-house and had problems, it was giving me a bad name."

"I started building my own dehumidifier kiln, but realized it wouldn't dry anything over 1 1/2 in. in live edge. That's when I went

to the vacuum kiln. It's the **iDry Standard** with a capacity of up to 2,000 board feet.

"It creates a vacuum in the stainless steel chamber and then blows hot air across the wood, first 2 hours in one direction and then 2 hours in another. This cycle continues. Once a day the vacuum drops, fresh air returns and water drains out. Then it repeats."

"It dries up to 10 times faster, retains color better and produces a better end product. **iDry Wood** advertises drying wood at a rate of 7 days per inch of thickness. It is slower than that, but each load is different, especially if drying mixed hardwood loads."

"I installed it in my barn where I have my shop, as it has to be in a heated area to keep waterlines from freezing. In the winter it helps heat the shop. In the summer the shop goes to about 100 degrees, even with the air conditioner running."

"The company has been good to work with. I bought it over the phone, and they shipped it with a 1-year warranty. I had some minor problems, but they've been with me every time. I can even link the kiln directly to them in Vermont for diagnostics via the internet."

"I had an issue with a water valve, and they shipped a new one the next day. They did a recall on door clamps and sent me new ones, even though I hadn't had a problem."

"If the president of the company doesn't answer the phone, someone else who knows the answer will. It's not always the price, but the customer service you get that means the most."

"It wasn't cheap (current list price of \$59,000). I paid \$49,000 for it in 2018, but it does what it does well. Like the **Woodmizer sawmill**, just about every part is made in the U.S. When I spend as much money as I did on the sawmill and the vacuum kiln, I want to keep it in the U.S."



Manske saves out large edge slabs and dries them with his vacuum kiln.



Wallace Bengtson, Braham, Minn.: "My 2021 40-V **Worx 14-in.** chainsaw had the best price of comparable electric chainsaws. It has impressive cutting speed and is light and easy to handle. The automatic chain tightening system makes it easy to keep the chain tight. The low battery price helps, too."

The two at a time charger is another nice feature."



Zach Gunnink, Gibbon, Minn.: "I really like my shaded **Jorestech** safety glasses (www.amazon.com). They have saved my eyes countless times. They fit great and are very durable. They are safety rated and also

Continued on next page