Underground Blaster Safely Destroys Gophers, Other Burrowing Animals

Underground blasters designed to blow up gophers, ground squirrels, badgers, prairie dogs, and other burrowing animals in their tunnels have been used for years. But an Idaho company says it's come up with a new blaster that's safer to use than anything on the market.

The Rodex 4000 is a 4 1/2-ft. long wand that mixes oxygen with propane. It uses an electronic solid state ignition system powered by two 9-volt batteries to develop a large controlled spark at the end of the wand, which ignites the gases in the tunnel system.

To kill gophers with the blaster, you locate the tunnel, stick the wand into the open hole and pump in about 45 to 60 seconds worth of propane and oxygen. Then you simply push a switch on the handle which sends a spark to the end of the wand, setting off a concussion that cracks open the tunnel up to 40 ft. away. You withdraw the wand, which isn't damaged, after the explosion.

"It's a real weapon of mass destruction yet it's safer than anything else on the market," says Dan Newton, who along with Monte Meyer invented the unit. "It's all electronic so you can't set it off accidentally. When you inject the gas into the tunnel there's a 1 1/2-second ignition delay which allows all the gas to exit the barrel before it can be fired. It won't fire as long as gas is still in the barrel. It's equipped with a swivel handle that makes it easy to hold onto. We've been testing it for three years and know that it will have a multi-year life span even under heavy use.

"Cost is less than 10 cents per blast. "The explosive concussion not only kills rodents but also destroys the tunnel system so neighboring gophers can't move in and take over. It also works well with badgers, ground squirrels, prairie dogs, woodchucks and moles."

The unit comes with safety gear including helmet, face shield, ear muffs, safety glasses, and additional ear protection. There's also 50 ft. of hose as well as regulators for propane and oxygen tanks (not supplied).

Sells for $1,225.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rodex Industries, Inc., Box 160, Midvale, Idaho 83645 (ph 800 750-4553; fax 208 355-2504).

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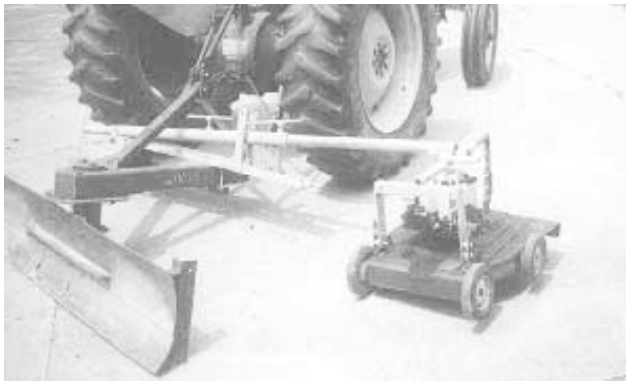

Hitch mounts on back of Strong's utility tractor and supports a 21-in. mower that swivels on the end of a 7-ft. long telescoping steel pipe.

Side-Mounted Mower Telescopes To The Side

Mowing ditches and the edges of ponds is no longer a problem for Grant Strong, Wabash, Ind., who made a telescoping hitch that mounts on back of his utility tractor. It lets him operate a 21-in. lawn mower 4 ft. out to the side of his tractor.

The mower, with its handle removed, swivels on the end of a 7-ft. long, 1 1/2-in. dia. steel pipe that fits inside a 2-in. dia. pipe. The inside pipe is held in place by a pair of set screws. The 2-in. dia. pipe attaches to a hinge on a piece of 3-in. channel iron that's clamped to the back of the tractor. The hinge allows the pipe and mower to flex up or down.

The mower is held by a steel frame made out of flat iron and pipe.

"I use it to mow along the edge of a pond and also to mow the steep banks along my neighbors' driveways. So far I haven't bent anything and it's worked fine," says Strong. "I use my 35 hp Ford 800 tractor to pull it. By adjusting the upper link on the 3-pt. I can mow up to 3 ft. above or below the level position. I generally rotate the 1 1/2-in. dia. pipe so that the front part of the mower angles upward and is therefore less likely to catch on anything. I push the pipe all the way in for road transport or to go through gates. By using bigger pipes, the same idea could be used to set the mower out farther or to pull a heavier mower."

Telescoping hitch lets Strong mow 4 ft. out along the edge of a pond. By adjusting the 3-pt.'s upper link he can mow up to 3 ft. above or below the level position.

Mower is held by a steel frame made out of flat iron and pipe.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Grant F. Strong, 4491 W. 100 S., Wabash, Ind. 46992 (ph 219 563-7168).

Bottom of "shaker bucket" is fitted with a screen. A 15 gpm hydraulic motor vibrates the entire bucket.

Shaker Bucket Sifts Dirt, Sand, Feed

"There's never been anything like it," says Richard Davis, Absarokee, Mont., inventor of a new "shaker bucket" for skid steers and front-end loaders.

Davis is a former dairy farmer who went into business as a concrete contractor. He wanted a way to sift through gravel and aggregates without spending an arm and a leg to have it done. He built a prototype unit that worked so well he patented it and found a manufacturer to put it on the market.

The bucket is fitted with a 15-gpm hydraulic motor that vibrates the entire bucket. Screens are interchangeable, ranging from 3/4-in. openings to 5-in. sq. openings. They can be custom-built to any size.

Manufacturer Jim Niebur says he's had tremendous interest in the bucket from contractors for concrete work and also for laying PVC pipe to get all the rocks out of the vicinity of the pipe as it's laid. But he says it could also be used to mix feed ingredients, or any other fine material, by simply scooping and sifting a couple times. It can also be used as a rock picker. It lets you scoop deeper and then sift out the dirt.

"We're just learning all the ways this bucket can be used," notes Niebur.

The bucket is isolated from the tractor it's mounted on by rubber mounting grommets.

A 72-in.wide shaker bucket sells for $5,600. A 62-in. model sells for $5,500.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jim Niebur, Two Rivers, Inc., Box 1137, Columbus, Mont. 59019 (ph 406 328-6499).