



Once compressed, tire bales are held together with five 9-gauge steel baling wires. In photo, a row of bales is being covered with concrete.



One of the most unusual uses for tire bales so far has been to construct this house for Vernie Houtchens of Pueblo, Colorado.

Special-Built Balers Help Create New Uses For Old Tires

Every year, an estimated 270 million passenger car and light truck tires are junked in the United States. Since 100 tires take up about 10 cu. yards, 270 million tires would make a pile between 25 and 30 ft. deep over a full section of land (640 acres).

If Ed and Nancy Drews have their way, these tires will be put to a good use rather than buried.

More than 15 years ago, the Grand Rapids, Minnesota, couple began researching tire recycling. They looked at producing fuel from shredded tires, but the startup and maintenance costs associated with this type of recycling led them to search further.

They finally discovered a tire baler made by a Florida company. After researching uses for baled tires, they bought a machine and formed Encore Systems, Inc. Since that time, they've designed new tire balers that are more versatile and portable than the one they purchased at first. They've sold these balers all over the U.S. and around the world.

ESI balers compact about 100 passenger and lightweight truck tires into bales that measure 30 by 50 by 60 in. Once compressed, tire bales are fastened together with

five 9-gauge steel baling wires. ESI also makes balers that will handle truck tires and larger farm tractor and off-road construction and mining tires.

Baling compresses tires to 1/5 their original size. Even if they are to be dumped into landfills, this reduces danger from fires, mosquito breeding, and saves space.

The balers turn tires into solid blocks that can be used for constructing windbreaks, erosion control along streams, rivers and lakes, and even for building roads. Tire bales weigh about a ton, so once they're laid in place they generally stay put.

Chautauqua County, New York, bought a tire baler to eliminate problems with illegal tire dumps and used some 400,000-plus baled tires as the base for several thousand feet of county gravel roads. After three years, they've found these roads hold up better than clay-based roads, particularly in the spring when the frost is coming out of the ground. A year ago, they successfully used tire bales for the base on about a quarter of a mile of asphalt in a low-lying area.

The Drews say the tire blocks, when laid in place of traditional sub-base materials, are

less costly and have high load-bearing capacity so roads stay firm, even in wet weather.

One of the most unusual uses for tire bales so far has been the house Vernie Houtchens built near his tire recycling business outside Pueblo, Colorado.

Houtchens has two ESI tire balers and processes more than 5,000 tires a day. He sells some of the bales for civil engineering purposes and some to cattlemen who use them to make windbreaks. But most, he says, end up in landfills.

When he decided to build a new house, he opted to use tire bales for the exterior walls. With walls 5 ft. thick, Houtchens' 4,300-sq. ft. house (including the attached garage) is well insulated from both weather and sound. "The walls have an R-factor of about 100," he says.

To make what Denver Post writers called

his "house of discards," Houtchens stacked bales side by side and two high. He then capped the tire bales with concrete - not that they would have moved - to have something solid for rafters to sit on and covered the outside of the bales with stucco, giving the building a "Southwest ranch-style" look.

The Drews say there's no limit to the types of structures that can be built with tire bales.

They're available for consulting and other assistance.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ed and Nancy Drews, Encore Systems, Inc., 585 NW Third St., Cohasset, Minn. 55721 (ph 218-328-0023; fax 218 328-0024; E-mail: encore@tirebaler.com; Website: www.tirebaler.com); or Vernie Houtchens, 19450 Midway Ranch Road, Pueblo, Colo. 81008 (ph 719 382-3019).

Lift Leaves Cows Legs Free To Walk, Nurse

"It's the only cow lift in the world that lets you walk and control the cow after lifting without causing trauma. And it's as comfortable as a hospital gurney bed," says Doug Ross, who holds North American manufacturing and marketing rights to the "Cow Lift 2000" for down cows.

Invented in Australia, Ross started selling imported units a couple years ago. Sales are so strong he now manufactures the units himself and has sold them across both the U.S. and Canada.

"There's nothing on the market that comes close to this product. You can lift a sick animal without causing any trauma or hurt and use it to walk the animal to help them get back on their feet," says Ross.

Designed to hang by chain from a front-end loader, you simply pull the side straps under the cow and then position the stretcher frame under it's belly. Once the straps are in place, you clip them to the lift frame which is suspended by chain from a loader or tractor boom.

"It's adjustable from young heifers to large cows and provides good access for suckling calves or for milk stripping. It's handy because you can throw it in the trunk of a car or back of a pickup," says Ross.



Lift is designed to hang by chain from a front-end loader.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Doug Ross, President, Strategic Marketing, P.O. Box 39001, Edmonton, Alberta T5B 4T8 Canada (ph 780 473-0343; fax 780 472-1826; E-mail: nuprod@compusmart.ab.ca).

Stirrup Extender Makes Mounting Easier

"If mounting your horse is making riding a chore, the E-Z Up Stirrup Extender can give you a leg up and put the fun back into riding," says Judi Rusk of E-Z Up. "It drops your stirrup down with the push of a button and locks back into place with a lift of your toe."

Rusk and her two partners, Bill McClelland and Andy Bates, bought the E-Z Up business three years ago, but the product was actually invented 25 to 30 years ago by a U.S. cavalry officer.

"It's very durable. I know of people who still use their original ones from 25 or 30 years ago," she says. "People who use the stirrup extenders really love them. They have told me they are so grateful for them because, otherwise, they wouldn't be able to do what they love most... ride! You only need one extender per saddle."

The E-Z Up Stirrup Extender sells for \$89 U.S. each (\$134 Canada plus G.S.T and P.S.T), plus \$11 shipping. Orders should specify required stirrup bar width (2 1/2 or 3 in.).



"E-Z Up" Stirrup Extender drops your stirrup down with the push of a button and locks back into place with a lift of your toe.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Judi Rusk or Bill McClelland or Andy Bates, E-Z Up Stirrup Extenders, Box 6301, Hinton, Alberta, Canada T7V 1X6 (ph toll free 877 865-1497); E-mail: ezup@stirrup-extender.com; Website: www.stirrup-extender.com).

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