Big Outside Boiler Burns 9-Ft. Logs

If you're tired of cutting and splitting firewood - and you need a LOT of firewood - check out this top loading wood boiler built by Tom Lubbers, Hudsonville, Mich. The 12,500-lb. unit has a firebox that holds up to 1 3/4 cords of wood in chunks up to 9 ft. long.

Many of Lubbers' customers have waste wood to burn, such as at a pallet plant, for example. Other boiler buyers include farmers who burn crop residue or switchgrass that they grow specifically for fuel.

Most of the 150 units he has sold throughout the U.S. and into Canada have gone to industrial customers that burn 25 to 150 cords of wood a year. At $47,000, the boiler can efficiently heat a 30,000 sq. ft. greenhouse or 100,000 sq. ft. insulated building. The boiler needs to be filled about every 12 hrs. to heat large spaces. But Lubbers says one load in his boiler can go 3 or 4 days heating his home, a greenhouse and two shops. For some operations a load of wood lasts up to 12 days.

Electronic controls monitor the exhaust and amount of air needed to maintain a steady heat (plus or minus 10 degrees) so no heat is wasted. Email alerts can be sent out for refueling, and the system can be checked via computer or phone.

Besides saving money on heating costs, Lubbers and his customers appreciate how easy it is to use with the boiler's remote-controlled hydraulic lid.

"Drive up with logs on the loader, push a button to open the lid, drop in the logs and push the button for the lid to go down," Lubbers says.

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Big firebox on Tom Lubbers's top loading wood boiler holds up to 1 3/4 cords of wood, in chunks up to 9 ft. long.

Doug Dumler used old center pivot pipe for the framing on his home-built, 60 by 60-ft. shed. Photo shows vertical pipes placed in cement-filled holes.

Shed Framed With Center Pivot Pipe

Doug Dumler built a 60 by 60-ft. shed with a 30 by 110-ft. " leg" off one side for less than $70,000 in materials and labor by using old center pivot pipe for framing.

"My biggest cost was the $24,000 to $26,000 for sheeting for the exterior and $10,000 to $12,000 for concrete," says Dumler. "All the framing was recycled center pivot pipe except for the 30-ft. long, 4 by 12 I-beams for the door frames, which were recycled from a county bridge project.

"I bought one set of pipes from a 1/4-mile pivot that had been salvaged out at a dealer for about $1,000," says Dumler. "I picked up 2 sets of pipes and all the angle iron at a farm auction for only $175. Including gas and borrowing a truck to haul it, the total cost was less than $400."

Vertical pipes were set in holes filled with concrete. Horizontal pipes were attached to the verticals using gussets that wrapped around the uprights.

For roof framing on the 60 by 60-ft. shed, Dumler used a combination of rolled pipe and round pipe. Here he cut the round pipe ends square, put angle iron on the ends, and welded it to the rolled pipe.

The pipe-framed structure has already passed a wind test. Recently a tornado passed within a mile of Dumler's farmstead.

"We had 70 to 80 mph winds, but we had no problems," he says. "We didn't even lose any trim."

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Weeder rides on two 16-in. pneumatic wheels, with a 12-in. wide weed bar between them.

2-Wheeled Weeder Provides Uniform Depth Control

"The 2 wheels provide uniform depth control and also make it easier to push than the one-wheeled weeders on the market," says Marlin Galde, Wahpeton, N. Dak., who recently sent FARM SHOW photos of this tool that he built.

It rides on two 16-in. pneumatic wheels and is equipped with a 12-in. wide weed bar, which Galde purchased from Hoss Tools. He also added a row of spring teeth behind the weed bar to loosen the soil and weeds before the rear wheel passes over them.

"The two wheels move smoothly over the ground and, as a result, the tool requires very little effort to push," says Galde. "I can quickly adjust the depth of the weed bar by loosening two nuts. The spring teeth are set slightly above the height of the weed bar and loosen up the weeds so they stay on top of the ground."

Galde says he paid about $39 for the wheel bar and $50 for the wheels. He used 3/4-in. rigid electrical conduit to make the handlebars and added handlebar grips.

A row of spring teeth behind weed bar loosens the soil and weeds before the rear wheel passes over them.

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Finished interior shows round pipe framing under the roof.

"Range Rocket" Takes Minerals To Livestock

"A customer with a large sheep operation was looking for an easy way to move lick tubs around the range as a way to manage grazing patterns," says Trevor Greenfield, Rio/Nutrition. "We came up with the sled idea for him and at first called it the sheep sled. However, it worked so well, we knew other grazers would be interested so we named it the Range Rocket."

The heavy duty plastic sled is designed to be easy to move behind an ATV, pickup or even a horse. Runners built into the sled allow it to slide easily along the ground. The low profile makes it easy for animals to access, even horned cattle such as longhorns.

"The Range Rocket is really popular in areas with light soil, such as the Sandhills of Nebraska," says Greenfield. "If you set out mineral in a feeder or a tub, once cattle trample the area, you can get a blow-out that is hard to stop. The sled is easy to move to a new area."

Runners built into heavy-duty plastic sled allow it to slide easily along the ground.

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