

“Best Buy” Coal Burning Furnace

Neil Eckelberg, Stanley, N. Dak.: “My E-Z Clean furnace from Maertens Mfg. takes the hassle and the mess out of burning coal. I wanted a furnace that would still work for me when I was older, and this one will.

“With a coal field only 50 miles away, I can heat my big old farmhouse for only \$600 a year. It used to take 500 gal. of propane per month in the winter.

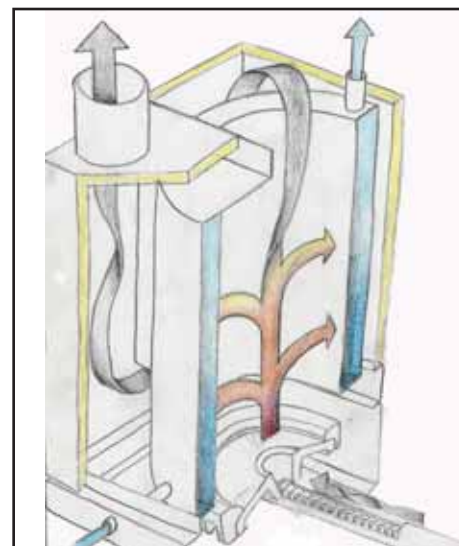
“When heat is needed, the auger automatically feeds coal on to a rotating burner plate. As the coal burns, the ashes are scraped off into a sealed catch pit. When I want to remove the ashes, I switch on an auger to send them to an outside trailer for easy removal. The totally enclosed system is designed for efficiency as well as ease of cleaning.”

With Eckelberg’s encouragement, FARM SHOW contacted Henry Maertens, Maertens Mfg. Maertens says the design is well proven. He built the first one for an uncle in the late 1970’s before starting to sell them commercially in the 1980’s.

“The first one is still functional,” says Maertens. “We’ve made very few design changes since. We also make conventional boilers as large as 2 million btu’s and are toying with the idea of making a 500,000-btu E-Z Clean.”

He says the standout feature has always been ease of cleaning. “Just grab a lever and move it back and forth,” says Maertens. “Internal scrapers do the work, and all the ash and dust falls into the enclosed ash pan. No opening doors or unbolting covers to get access to use brushes.”

The easy cleaning feature is especially



E-Z Clean coal-burning furnace has been on the market since the 1980’s. The totally enclosed system is designed for an efficient burn and easy cleaning.

important as Maertens’ boilers are more complex than most. The hot gasses released by the burning coal travel nearly 3 times farther than in most boilers, he explains.

“Most boilers have about 5 ft. of travel from the burner head to the chimney,” he says. “In ours, the gas travels 14 ft. as it goes up, down and around the pressure vessel. For even greater efficiency, the passageways are narrow. Combined with the time the flue gasses spend in the chamber, this allows more heat to be absorbed by the water.”

Maertens says the design produces maximum heat recovery without creating problems. Other coal burning designs avoid the narrow passageways and long travel due to

a tendency for coal ash to plug them up.

“Plugging up is not a concern with our internal scrapers,” says Maertens. “Just pull the lever every few days or more often if you like.”

This is a long life sealed, pressurized system, not a short life open system.

The E-Z Clean furnace is available as a 175,000-btu model, priced at \$6,500 and a 350,000-btu model priced at \$8,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Maertens Mfg., 2245 41st Ave. S.W., Center, N. Dak. 58530 (ph 701 794-3183; henrym@westriv.com; www.maertensmfg.com).

Reader Inquiry No. 150

Now Is The Time To Prevent Poison Ivy

If you want to eliminate or reduce the agony of a poison ivy infection next summer, now is the time to do something about it. It sounds too good to be true, but for 20 years Eric’s Pharmacy in Shawnee, Okla., has offered a simple treatment that is very effective. Pharmacist and owner, Eric Winegardner uses an old German formulation to create a compound that includes a small amount of Rhus Toxicodendron (the base substance in poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac) and plant resin. It’s sold in packs with three liquid vials. One vial is taken each week for 3 weeks, by holding the liquid in the mouth 30 seconds before swallowing.

“Basically it’s like an oral vaccine,” Winegardner says. It builds immunity against

symptoms from the poison plants. He admits he was skeptical when he first got the formula from another pharmacist. Now, he notes, his customers would be very angry if he quit making the Homeopathic compound.

About 75 percent of his customers are local ranchers or businesses like gas and power companies that buy the solution for their workers. The rest of the sales are made through the pharmacy’s website (\$16.95).

“It has varying degrees of effectiveness. Just about everyone will respond to it. Most become immune, some still get a mild rash. For some it just doesn’t work,” Winegardner says. “But from our experience most people respond to it. It’s changed a lot of people’s lives.”

There are very few side effects with the Homeopathic treatment. He’s only heard of a few people who got a light rash. The crucial thing is to take the treatment during the winter, when poison ivy is dormant. The dose lasts about a year and is safe for young children as well. Winegardner adds that it’s important to avoid using minty mouthwash prior to taking the solution as it prevents absorption.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Eric’s Poison Ivy Treatment, 3306 N. Kickapoo, Shawnee, Okla. 74804 (ph 405 275-9640; www.poisonivyprevention.com).

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