

Electric Fence Gate Needs No Insulators

“We had problems with insulators and wires breaking on our electric fence gate. So I placed a 3-ft. length of 18-in. dia. plastic field tile over a wood post at each end of the gate. Vertical pvc tubes in the gate hold the wire, eliminating the need for insulators,” says Ryan Dahlman, Bad Axe, Mich.

The 20-ft. wide gate is made from 4 strands of high tensile wire, which run through holes drilled into vertical pvc tubes spaced about 5 ft. apart. The wire strands wrap around deep grooves in the tile at one end of the gate. “After looping the wire around the tile we tighten it and then clamp it off. No staples or insulators are needed,” says Dahlman.

The wires fasten onto a pvc tube at the opposite end of the gate. A pair of thick wire loops wrap around the tile and slip over the top and bottom of the pvc tube to keep the gate standing upright.

To open the gate Dahlman slips the top wire loop off the pvc tube, then lifts the tube out of the bottom loop and walks the gate open.

“We’ve used this system for 3 years and really like it,” says Dahlman. “Deer



Ryan Dahlman made this 20-ft. gate from 4 strands of high tensile wire, which run through holes drilled into vertical pvc tubes spaced 5 ft. apart. No insulators are needed.

used to run into the gate wires and pull the insulators out, but that can’t happen now. Also, crimping sleeves on both sides of the pvc tubes keep the wires tightly in place so we can’t accidentally overtighten the wires and break them.”

Dahlman has a cow-calf operation with a rotational grazing system. “Some of our

pastures surround woods which the cattle use for shade during the summer, so we’ve made 5 or 6 of these gates to let cows go into the woods at different places.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ryan Dahlman, 289 Rapson Road, Bad Axe, Mich. 48413 (ph 989 551-8129; rdahlman8970@gmail.com).



Wire strands wrap around 18-in. dia. plastic tile placed over wood post at one end of gate.

His “Forever Fence Posts” Have Concrete Footings

By Dee George, Contributing Editor

Eric Little’s motivation for designing and building his hybrid concrete and wood fence posts is simple. He only wants to build the fence once.

“I’ve seen so many rotten fence posts so I don’t want to ever have to rebuild. I call these my forever fence posts,” says the Freeland, Wash., resident. So far, the custom homebuilder has made and “planted” about 30 of the posts in his free time. He estimates each post costs about \$12 and that it will take another 100 posts to complete the fencing on his family’s 10-acre farm.

Little mixed concrete with wood for a couple of reasons. Concrete won’t rot in the ground, but an 8-ft. post would be extremely heavy and challenging to attach wooden boards to.

He made molds for the concrete end of the post out of 2 by 6’s cut to size, lined with plywood with a laminate finish to create smooth-surfaced 4 3/4-in. square posts. The concrete portion of the post is 4 ft. long with the top foot formed to create a “half-lap.” Little inserts a short piece of 1/2-in. dia. PEX tubing part way up the lap to later insert a bolt and also embeds two 30-penny spikes at the top of the concrete to secure it to the half-lap on the wood post.

Little mixes high strength concrete and uses pea gravel small enough to fill the narrow end of the form.

He and his father cut the posts and 2 by 6 fence boards on their sawmill out of Douglas fir. The bottom 14 in. of the posts are soaked in preservative for added protection against rotting. The wood part of the post is usually about 5 in. above ground with about 32 in. of the concrete post buried.

Each post weighs about 100 lbs., so Little uses a tractor to lower it into the posthole that is then filled with crushed rock and soil that’s tamped well.

Besides planting forever posts (11 ft. apart), Little wants the fence boards to last a long time. He cuts 1/8-in. rings out of 1-in. pvc pipe and uses them for spacers behind the boards so water runs down instead of collecting and rotting the boards. He finishes the fence with high quality oil primer and two coats of paint.

“I’m doing this fence partly for aesthetic reasons. I wanted a traditional three-board fence,” Little explains.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Eric Little, 1971 Amanda Ln., Freeland, Wash. 98249 (ph 360 730-4799; ericwane@gmail.com).



Hybrid fence posts are made from wood set in 4-ft. long concrete footings. “With this design I don’t think I’ll ever have to rebuild,” says Eric Little.



Top 1 ft. of concrete footing forms a “half-lap”. A short length of PEX tubing inserted part way up lap is used to insert a bolt (left). Thin pvc pipe rings behind boards serve as spacers to keep water from collecting.

Simple Hitch Guide

Gene Reed’s rear license plate has more than a few dings from hooking up his trailer, but there have been no new ones since he installed his hitch guide.

“It is easy to get pretty close, yet not quite there when backing up to a hitch,” says Reed. “The hitch guide isn’t much, but it is just enough to bump a hitch into line with the ball. It also prevents backing up too far and banging up a license plate.”

When Reed says there isn’t too much to the guide, he’s right. In his case, he used a piece of right-angle steel salvaged from old construction equipment. After taking out most of the angle, he welded it to a short length of 2 by 2-in. receiver hitch. He then welded the ball to the other side of the plate.

“Each wing should be about 6 in. wide to catch the trailer hitch,” says Reed. “It can be any height you want.”



V-shaped steel plate is welded to the receiver hitch behind the ball.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gene Reed, 13442 E 132nd Ave., Brighton, Colo. 80601 (ph 303 659-8260; windmillreed@outlook.com).



Wood part of post stands 5 in. above ground, with about 32 in. of the concrete footing buried.