

Inserting the Vac Trac into the hydraulic oil port.



Changing Hydraulic Filters The No Mess Way

Unscrew a hydraulic oil filter, and if you just lose a few gallons of oil, you're lucky. Oscar Scott wasn't, so he figured out how to eliminate oil loss and the mess that often comes with it. His solution was a device he calls the Vac Trac. It worked well, so he formed a company to sell it, all because he made a mess on his shop floor and himself.

"The manual on my new Kubota said to change the filter at 400 hrs. and change the hydraulic oil at 1,000," recalls Scott. "I unscrewed the filter and got drenched in oil. My wife wouldn't even let me in the house in those clothes."

Determined not to make that mistake twice, Scott discussed the issue with his Kubota techs. They insisted that setting a 5-gal. bucket under the filter with him on his back was the only way to do the job, but he had to be quick. At 80, he had no interest in lying on his back on the shop floor and assured them he was not that fast.

"John David Shannon, manager of James Brother Implement in Amarillo, Texas, suggested I use a shop vac," says Scott. "He explained that attaching it to the gearbox inlet would produce a vacuum to hold the oil in place when the filter was removed."

While the idea seemed sound, Scott recognized that he would only need about 20 in. of negative pressure to hold the 5 to 6-in. oil depth in the reservoir. He was concerned that the high volume (120 in. of negative pressure) with the shop vac could damage

seals and worse.

"Shop vacs are inconvenient, cumbersome and dangerous to use," says Scott. "A shop vac's high-volume flow could create violent enough bubbles to result in an aerosol of hydraulic fluid that would not only foul the shop vac but potentially create a combustible mixture of hydrocarbons and air."

"I developed the Vac Trac," he says. "It's about the size of a flashlight, 9 1/2 in. long and about 2 1/4 in. in diameter. The battery can be recharged in about two hours via a USB cable."

The Vac Trac produces 90 percent less vacuum than a conventional shop vac. It has a magnetic mounting ring for a tight, hands-free connection to easy-to-reach gearbox inlets. It comes with an extension tube for reaching less accessible inlets with magnets on the side of the device to attach it to nearby housings. Adapters that match it up with all tractor brands are included. It's priced at \$174.95.

"That first time I changed a filter on my tractor, it took an hour," says Scott. "I made a mess on the floor, lost a set of clothes and my religion a time or two. The second time, using the Vac Trac, I lost about three tablespoons of oil."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Red Dog Vac Trac, 13610 County Rd. U, Perryton, Texas 79070 (ph 512-714-5000; info@reddogvactrac.com; www.reddogvactrac.com).

New Electric Bandfile

The M12 Fuel 1/2-in. by 18-in. bandfile is the first cordless bandfile that delivers pneumatic performance, size and features for professional automotive, industrial and metalworking users.

It uses brushless technology to deliver the fastest spot weld removal. The cordless bandfile has two speed settings, forward and reverse, a lock-on button and a variable speed trigger.

The bandfile has a tool-free 360-degree arm rotation, providing greater mobility and access. With the M12 XC4.0 battery, this product can remove up to 50 spot welds per charge.

"Just as good as my expensive pneumatic bandfiles but way more mobile. Plus, I never thought I would see one of these with reverse," says Clint, a user on the Milwaukee website. This tool has a 96% positive rating online.

Priced at \$249, it's available from most tool retailers that sell a full line of Milwaukee products. We found that a battery came with purchase on some and others did not. Shipping varies by retailer.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup,



Photo courtesy of www.milwaukeekeetool.com

Battery-powered bandfile can remove up to 50 spot welds per charge.

Milwaukee Tool, 13135 W. Lisbon Rd., Brookfield, Wis. 53005 (ph 800-729-3878; www.milwaukeekeetool.com).



Laforge LLC offers front-mounted hitches and PTOs, which most buyers use to power snowblowers, mowers, generators or other PTO-powered machines.

Front-Mount Hitches And Drives Offer Options

Laforge LLC began its product line of aftermarket front-mounted hitches and PTO drives due to a need by some of the larger tractor manufacturers decades ago.

"There was a need back then, but a big part of our goal was to increase the capability of the tractor to run additional equipment," says Laforge North American Distribution Manager John Else. "This led to more forward-thinking and a large array of aftermarket solutions."

The company offers front-mounted hitches and PTOs, which most buyers use to power snowblowers, mowers, generators or other PTO-powered machines.

Else explains that their 540 and 1,000-rpm PTOs are run by three different gearboxes, with models turning counterclockwise and clockwise. Most are gear-driven directly off the engine, except for the largest tractors.

They also build front hitch mounting systems and brackets for centered loads, offset loads, and intensive heavy-duty equipment. Applications can be raised or lowered for field work or transport. Available options include hydraulic receptors, connection kits, electrical harnesses, weight carriers and electronic controls.

Their PTOs and hitch mounts fit almost every tractor make and model, including Deere, New Holland, Case-IH, AGCO, Claas, Fendt and Massey Ferguson.

Laforge offers a factory installation option for all their products at the OEM dealership. "It will ship to our facility before going to a dealer, and we complete it by working closely with the OEM dealership to meet all their requirements and standards. All our products and labor are factory warranty approved."

The aftermarket hitches and PTOs are manufactured in France at the Laforge factory. Their Iowa-based facility works with hundreds of dealers across North America for purchasing and installations.

The front-mount hitches cost between \$5,000 and \$14,000, and the PTO with driveline alone costs between \$6,000 and \$9,000, depending on the tractor size, make and model.

"Our quality products and craftsmanship set us apart from our competitors," Else says. "Our heavy-duty systems are more robust."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, LaForge LLC, 1824 Lincoln St., Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613 (ph 855-408-3332; salesna@laforgroup.com; www.laforgroup.com).

Extension Clamp Gets In Tight Spaces

The Tite-Reach extension clamp is made for those tough-to-reach spots your hand can't reach or may be too hot to touch.

The clamp is available in four sizes: Micro, Mini, Standard and Max. The Standard is 10 1/2 in. long, ideal for confined spaces. The Max extends up to 36 in., providing extra length for larger machinery or more challenging tasks. It's designed to work with nuts and bolts ranging from 1/4 to 1 in.

Built from hardened alloy steel with a corrosion-resistant finish, the Tite-Reach Extension Clamp can handle repeated use in the shop or out in the field.

The extension clamp can save you time by allowing you to access tight spots without removing other equipment parts. Its vice-like design also ensures you won't drop the part held until you loosen the tension nut. Unlike pliers, you don't need to maintain tension to keep what you're holding in place.

The tools start at \$18, plus shipping. The company's website sells a pack of three different sizes for \$49 and offers free shipping on orders over \$100.

"Just like its Tite-Reach ratchet extensions, these make the two-finger nut grasp, so hoping you don't drop it is a thing of the



Clamp holds nuts and bolts in place, allowing access to hard to reach places.

past," says user Paul Wisuri. Online reviews were overall positive, with 97% rating them at 4 or 5 out of 5 stars. People liked the ability to reach into tight spaces. One reviewer mentioned they wished it were built a bit more durable.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tite-Reach, 608 15th St. SE, Orange City, Iowa 51041 (ph 866-721-9399; support@tite-reach.com; www.tite-reach.com).