



Water Heaters Easy Way To Boost Tractor Traction

If you regularly pull big loads with a smaller tractor, you might want to take a look at the "ballasting" system Donald Stellpflug came up with.

Stellpflug pulls a big Balzer manure spreader mounted on wagon axles over his southwestern Wisconsin farm's rolling sand knolls. But because the load is large and the sand soft, Stellpflug's Allis D-17 needed more weight for traction.

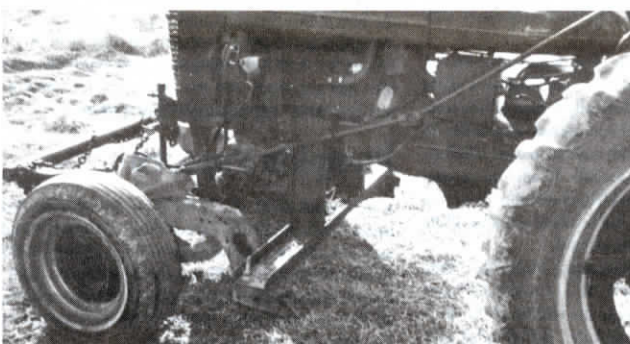
So Stellpflug mounts two junked 55-gal. water heater tanks underneath the rear axle of his tractor. Four large log chains and three large chain binders hold the

tanks in place. The chains wrap around the axles and crisscross the drawbar.

When pulling his spreader, Stellpflug fills the tanks with water. The combination of water heaters, chains and water adds more than 1,000 lbs. extra weight for better traction.

There were no out-of-pocket expenses," says Stellpflug, "and it works real well."

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Auto Front End On Farmall Tractor

"I needed another tractor to mow terraces and pull farm wagons. We already had a 1949 Farmall 'H' that had long since been retired from row crop work," says Noel Breitenbucher, Trenton, Mo.

"It was in perfect shape except that the narrow front end was worn badly. I couldn't find an affordable factory-built wide front end for it and I also wanted power steering. So I installed the front axle, power steering pump and gearbox from a 1972 Pontiac Catalina car. I removed the tractor's original steering wheel and mounted a smaller steering wheel with a spinner knob for knee clearance on the left side because my knees were always bumping it."

Breitenbucher mounted the axle subframe under the tractor using brackets that bolt to the frame of the tractor and run across the back of the front axle. He cut the tractor's steering rod off in front of the radiator and welded a short length of steel pipe between the rod and subframe to connect them together. He used a U-joint to change the angle of the

steering rod about half way back to the new steering wheel.

He welded two pieces of angle iron onto the left side of the tractor to hold the car's power steering pump, which is belt-driven off the fan pulley.

"It has the car spindles, springs, and shocks so it rides smoothly and steers great," says Breitenbucher. "I saved the tractor's original wheels, front axle, and other parts so that I can mount them back on if I ever want. I removed the tractor's original steering wheel because it was in the way. I'm 6 ft. 2 in. tall and was bumping it with my knee whenever I used the clutch. I have a friend who works at a front-end alignment shop and was able to use their truck toe-in pointer gauge to perfectly align the subframe. I welded a 3-in. dia. steel pipe across the front of the subframe so that if ever get stuck I can pull the tractor out."

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Mark Newhall, Editor



Home-Built Rock Splitter

"My neighbors say if I ever get arrested and sent up the river I'll be in my glory busting rocks," says Ron Gallati, Wyoming, Minn., who made his own rock splitter.

"It all started a few years ago when I decided I wanted a field stone fireplace," Gallati explains. "I found someone to split the stone by hand for me. Then I decided I wanted a field stone retaining wall, but the fellow who split the stones for the fireplace wasn't available. I couldn't find anyone else to split the stones, so I made my own splitter that's powered by my log splitter.

"It's basically a paper-cutter style cutter with a hard-faced cutting edge and a 6-to-1 ratio of leverage."

The steel knife Gallati made is 1 1/2-in. thick by 8-in. high by 5-ft. long with a cutting edge angled to 30 degrees. The

blade's 1 1/2-in. thick hard facing is made out of steel bar stock welded to the edge of the blade. An adjustable pin in one end allows the blade to pivot on an I-beam. The log splitter mounts vertically at the opposite end of the blade. Its hydraulic cylinder attaches to the open end of the blade and powers it up and down.

The splitter cuts rocks, slicing them in half so they have one flat side. It cuts through field stones handily, but may not be suitable for granite-type rocks, says Gallati who's only used it on field stones. The splitter cuts rocks up to the size of basketballs, but struggles with anything bigger, he says.

Gallati's total investment in the tool is about \$75.

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