

## Tire tanks benefit ponds, water quality

by Mark Parker | Posted: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:54 am

Protecting water quality as well as your financial investment in a pond is a win-win scenario delivered by tire tank installations.

And last week at Whitetail Ridge Ranch near Farlington, Kansas, folks got a hands-on, how-to installation lesson.

Herschel George, K-State Southeast Watershed Specialist, told participants he prefers using a 30.5X32 combine tire like the one used at Whitetail Ridge Ranch, operated by David and Cindy Black.

Fertilizer truck front tires (48X31X20) also work well, he said, adding that the tire should be tall enough to accommodate 18 inches of water above the lower tire bead. Cutting the tire opening was accomplished using a reciprocating saw with a metal 5-6 teeth-per-inch metal cutting blade. George suggested continuously lubricating the blade with a water-dish soap mixture.

The tank should be at least six feet lower than pond's water level (bottom of the primary spillway pipe) and overflow to daylight.

It's important for the tank itself to be level, George emphasized, with the center firmed, leaving 4-6 inches of space for concrete.

The watershed specialist also suggested placing geotextile material under and around the tank, which significantly and economically prevents gravel from sinking into the mud.

For step-by-step instructions and plumbing materials, contact K-State Research and Extension or email Herschel George at [HGeorge@ksu.edu](mailto:HGeorge@ksu.edu).

From the landowner's perspective, there are ample advantages from fenced ponds.

"There are very real water quality benefits but there are also practical benefits for the producer," he said. "We think of pond water as being free but it sure isn't. It's expensive to build a pond and it can be just about as expensive to clean it out."

George also pointed out that fencing prevents cattle from falling through ice and lessens the potential for toxic blue green algae in ponds.



### Tire Tank Demo

Herschel George, K-State watershed specialist, demonstrates how to install a tire tank during a workshop near Farlington, Kansas, last week.

On the human side of the equation, one pond might not seem like much of a water quality threat but contamination in hundreds of ponds in a watershed can be.

Bob Love, chairman of the Marmaton WRAPS (Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies) organization, noted that the Marmaton Watershed includes Bone Creek Lake which provides drinking water for more than 20,000 people from Arcadia to Columbus.

He said the area has been prioritized and received EPA funding through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Part of that money is earmarked for a 50 percent cost-share program to encourage landowners to protect water quality. Other BMPs (best management practices) include grassed waterways, vegetative buffers, continuous no-till, permanent vegetation, filter strips, and several others.

Cost-share assistance information is available from county conservation districts. £