

Technical Bulletin 23

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Automatic Play Sand Sifter for Blast Media

by Brian S. Elliott

For small, occasional, sandblasting operations, commercial media may not offer a cost-effective solution for the task at hand. Many shop personnel use ordinary “play sand,” which is commonly available at your local hardware store or home improvement center. Play sand is an excellent media for general-purpose blasting. It is packaged in sealed, 40-pound bags and is very inexpensive. However, because it is intended for play, the granule size may not be particularly consistent, with the most significant problem being the presence of small bits of gravel mixed with the sand. For a sandbox, this is not a concern, but a sandblaster, the gravel is extremely problematic. The little stones will clog up the small orifices in the equipment. If stones do pass, they can severely dent the parts being blasted. The play sand can be cleaned through a sifting box, but this can be a lengthy and physically demanding process.

Shown in the illustration is an automatic play sand sifter, which can be easily constructed and makes the process of cleaning the media very easy. The unit consists of a length of 10” PVC sewer pipe with a cap.

The OD of the pipe is drilled

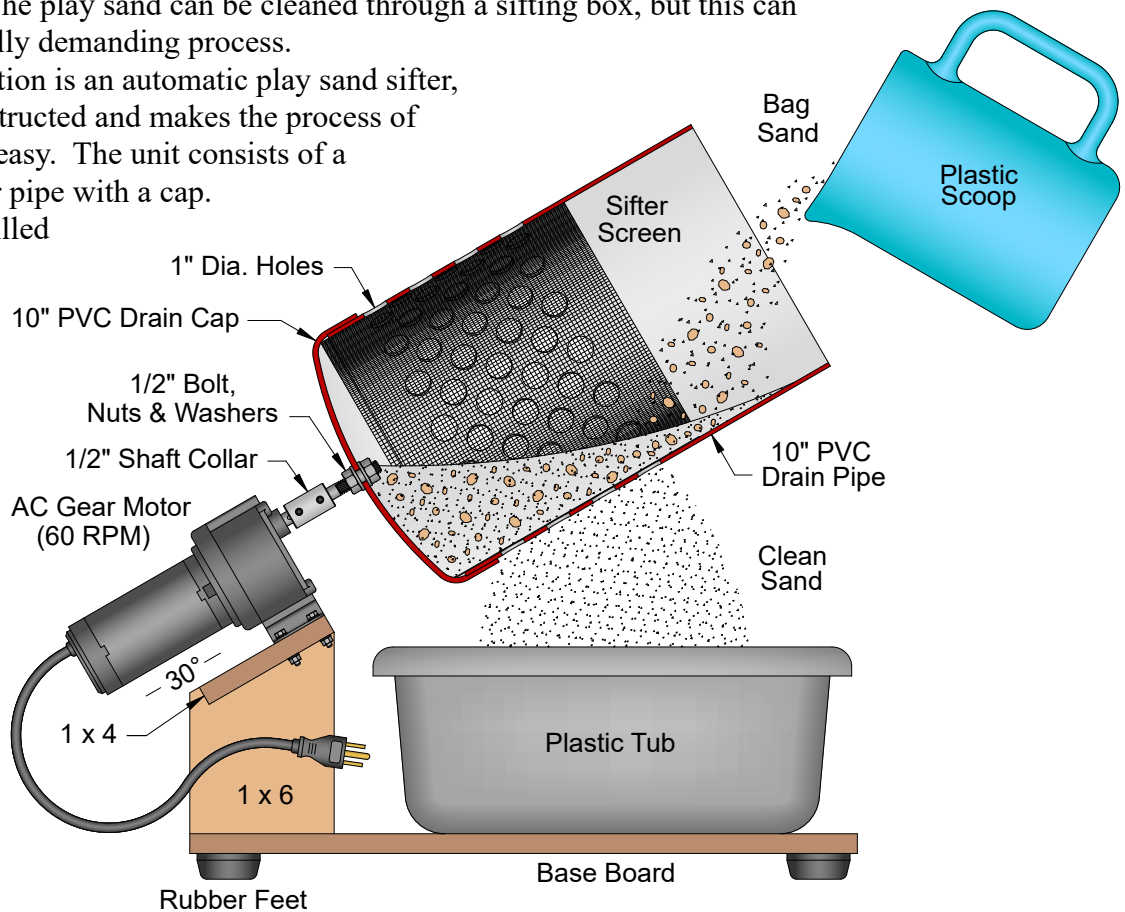
with 1” diameter holes, and the ID is lined with a piece of metal screen.

The drum is attached to a 60 RPM gearhead motor mounted at 30 degrees.

A plastic tub is placed below the drum in order to catch the sifted sand.

When the motor is running, bag sand is poured into the mouth of the drum and clean sand comes out through the 1” holes.

After sifting, the remaining gravel can be discarded.



— WARNING —

All blasting processes produce inhalation hazards. Proper respiratory safety equipment is recommended at all times during actual blasting operations and the handling of blast materials. OSHA regulations concerning blasting and blast media may be reviewed at: www.OSHA.gov.

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