

## Earth Auger

Picture a campground covering a few acres, occupied by a couple hundred poorly-equipped campers. Many do not even have tents, most do not have propane or Coleman-fueled stoves, and a few have little more than the clothes on their backs. Now picture this campground with no running water or sanitation. Water must be hauled in containers small enough for a person to carry, but a total absence of toilets poses a far more serious problem – compounded by the extreme minimum of water available. As intolerable as this scene may be, it is the life of many thousands of Americans scattered among our cities and towns.

A simple auger that could put a 6” diameter hole down 5’ or more would be a big help. Based upon personal experience with this type of solution, I would expect a hole of such dimensions to serve an individual for a few months. A little earth kicked in after each use virtually eliminates odors and totally eliminates insects. Within a few months, aerobic bacteria (as opposed to the foul-smelling anaerobic types) will have killed human disease pathogens and reduced the site to benign compost. Re- drilling at a previous site could be avoided if rocks were mixed with earth to fill in the top few inches.

This auger was created from a piece of 6” pipe welded to an 8” nipple of 1/2” steel pipe. This nipple is then coupled to a 5’ extension with a handle.



The shaft is centered on the pipe by a couple of jaws cut from steel. A pattern was first made from sheet metal to simplify repetition for multiple units.

A short lag screw was welded to the 8” nipple to help to guide the hole. Small high-power magnets are used to hold the pieces in place while the weld is being started. Be careful to remove the magnets immediately after an initial spot is welded, since the heat will easily destroy them.

