

Improve Your Image

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The machine to be painted, in this case a front end loader, is placed in the shed. The wheels removed and the tractor placed up on blocks, cowlings and other removable body parts taken off and instruments covered with paper and tape. Finally, we wipe down the tractor with laquer thinner solvent to remove any oil film and condensation which could prevent the paint from sticking. We are now ready to paint.

Using a compressed air type spray rig we apply two coats of grey primer mixed according to label directions, allowing a short drying time between coats. Those body parts removed earlier are also painted at this time. We like to let the last coat of primer dry overnight before beginning the color coat.

For the color coat we found Ouron Synthetic Gloss Enamel to be a good quality paint. We mix it according to manufacturer's recommendations using naphtha to thin it to the desired viscosity according to the ambient temperature. The colder it is, the thinner we mix the paint. Again a short time is allowed between coats to allow the previous coat to become tacky. After the final coat is applied we leave it to dry. We like to paint on Friday because the unit has all weekend to dry, then on Monday we put the wheels and body parts back on, uncover the instruments, and we have a new-looking tractor.

The toughest part about painting is getting the needed manpower and equipment together. Most everyone has an air compressor or can rent one. Spraying is easier, faster and more professional looking than using a brush. You can paint almost anywhere, even outdoors as long as the weather cooperates. For my part finding someone who could do the job was a problem. I solved the problem by finding out who on my staff had sufficient interest in the project to follow it through. After this it was just a matter of mastering the operation of the equipment, improvising when the right resources were not available and learning from our mistakes. The results have been gratifying.

The only drawback I've found so far is that it is hard to convince management of the need for replacement equipment when the present unit looks so new.

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- Directly responsible to Director of Parks and Recreation.
- Position available April 1, 1978

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