CONTAINER UNDERGROUND .COM

Info Do it yourself

DO IT YOURSELF...Partial Burial Example

FIND A SITE AND EXCAVATE FOR A PARTIAL BURIAL
This site was chosen below the top of a fairly steep hillside well above the valley below. It is situated in a spot that is protected from the wind but away from possible flood areas. The site elevation is 3800ft. It faces a Southern exposure to maximize solar heating potential. Using an excavator is recommended so it can also be used to chain up and drop in a 20ft container. 40ft containers require a crane to drop in which could get expensive. The solution is to dig a trench that the truck can back into and drop off in place.

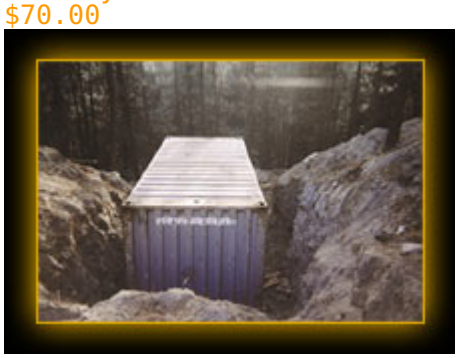
DEPTH IS MEASURED AND BOTTOM IS LEVELED
Hole depth is dug about 12ft at it's deepest point to allow for about 3-4 ft of coverage.

CONTAINER IS DELIVERED
The area to be delivered should have enough room to turn the truck around. Usually around 100ft of cleared area. If the truck gets stuck the excavator will be able to push the truck out of any sticky situation. (First hand experience)

PREPARATION FOR DROP IN
This container was delivered with 4 10ft railroad ties included and dropped in the hole by the excavator. The ties were leveled with a sight level and marker pole, piling up dirt under the ties to level them.

DROP IN
Container is chained up on the 4 corner lugs. Chains will need to be adjusted for equal tension. The chains are hooked to the back lug on the excavator's bucket. A rope is used to adjust the swing and placement.

VIEW FROM THE TOP PRIOR TO ASSEMBLY
Modifications include a welded security lock box, two flanged 4" vent pipes pre-fitted and assembled on site. They each include an interior flange, o-ring and bolt set that is sandwiched on the skin and bolted on the inside. As an easy modification example, I installed one of the ceiling vent pipes in the corner so it could double as a wood stove chimney. I found a small wood stove in a catalog for about a $70.00



FINAL ASSEMBLY
Pipes are bolted on and sealant is applied. I used a heavy duty tarp to cover the entire container. It is important to note that depending on the climate will determine your waterproofing needs. This particular area is very dry, 8"-12" of rain per year so waterproofing is not a big concern. However, great care should be taken in your waterproofing strategy. A coating of rubberized asphalt over the entire container could be required.

In extremely wet areas a refrigerated

container (right) may be the way to go. They are aluminum skinned so they won't corrode, insulated and have stainless steel interior walls. They are a tougher construction but harder to modify. Aluminum does not weld too easily, and stainless steel is harder to cut and weld. Reinforcement with timbers screwed to the walls may be easier.

BACKFILL

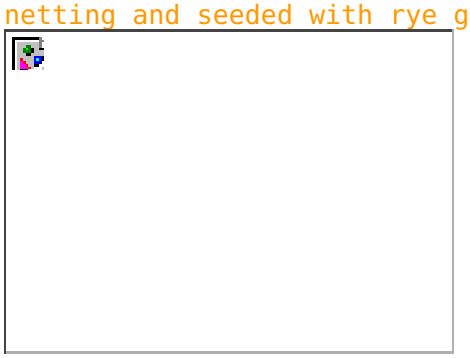
Backfill must be done carefully to avoid large rocks getting too close to the container. Depending on budget, 1/2" gravel can be used under and around for drainage and safety. But if the container is modified correctly, you should be able to just cover it up with relatively clean fill.

DEPTH OF FILL

Depending on the strength of the roof supports will determine how deep you want to cover. This one will handle 3ft of earth at the deepest point. The roof and sides are supported with 3/8" welded steel angles every 3ft. In addition to steel supports, I chose to add a 4x6 wood beam running lengthwise supported by 3 4x4 timbers in the middle. This takes up a little more real estate but it will support a lot of earth.

Ideally if you have the budget, the way to go is 4 to 6 inch 3/8" thick square tube steel welded to the edges and carefully spot welded to the skin in a mineshaft configuration ribbed every 2-3ft. This configuration should be good for full burial as well.

FINISHING TOUCHES
The area over the container was covered with erosion control netting and seeded with rye grass.



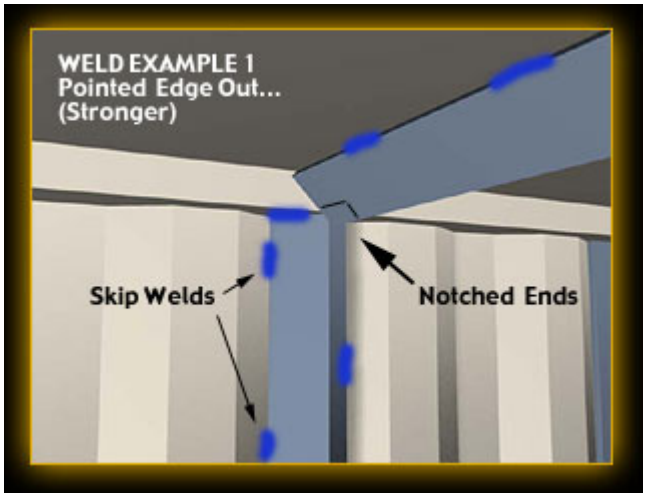
MODIFICATIONS...Considerations and Concerns (Ongoing)
- In order to be able to seal yourself in, a secondary wall must be built behind the outside bay doors with an inward opening hatch(see below).

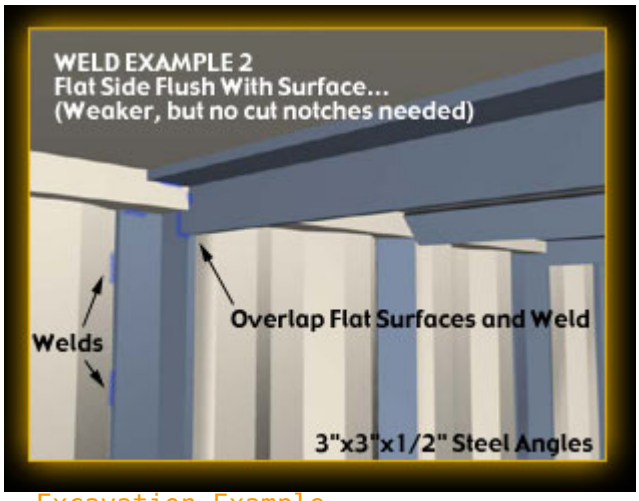
NEW! NEW! NEW! Since the original writing of this web site I have found a new vendor that offers containers with a patented locking system that allows for locking/unlocking from the inside!

- Ship hatches and cargo doors are available. Pricing runs about $300 to $500 depending on availability and condition. These will need to be framed in with welded steel angles.

PLANS AND DIAGRAMS (Ongoing)
- My dream design...too expensive so I had to settle for a bare bones version. Download.pdf (Needs Acrobat Reader)

- Reinforcement examples using 3"x3"x1/2" steel angles spanning every 22" on walls and ceiling.





- Excavation Example

More coming soon...

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