

## Township's public works employees adjust to new home

16 Oct 2009 — *Bucks County Courier Times*

middletown

The new building has a furnace that can run on used motor oil and transmission fluid.

Middletown public works employees finally have their new home.

The new \$3 million township public works building on Veterans Highway opened a week ago today, and the 21 public works employees are still getting everything fully operational, said public works director Rick Wendel.

"This had been talked about for ages, so it's nice to finally give our people a much bigger and nicer place to work," he said.

The 12,000-square-foot, two-story building is on the same 16-acre property as the old 6,000-square-foot public works building, which will be used for vehicle storage and a shop to make highway signs, Wendel said. The new structure was paid for out of a \$10 million bond issue approved by the supervisors in 2006.

"The old building will let us get more of our vehicles in out of the weather and that will make them last longer," said Wendel.

The new building has a four-bay garage with two hydraulic lifts and an overhead crane for extensive engine overhauls. Also located there are Wendel's office, an office for secretaries, a women's bathroom, a spare office, a parts storage room, a small kitchenette with refrigerator and microwave, a larger lunchroom and a men's bathroom, shower and locker room.

"In the old building, the guys used to eat their lunch in the garage next to the vehicles," said Wendel. "The shower in the new building will be handy when the guys have to stay late plowing snow."

The new building also features a special furnace that can burn used motor oil and transmission fluid, in addition to standard heating oil. Wendel and township Manager Ray Stepnoski are hoping to heat the building solely with used motor oil and transmission fluid collected from public works vehicles and area residents. Wendel said he is setting up collection times when residents can drop off their used motor oil and transmission fluid.

Stepnoski praised the work of the project's general contractor, Magnum Inc. of Warminster. The new building's architect, Chuck McGuffin of Philadelphia, also helped to oversee construction and make sure things were going according to plan, said Stepnoski.

"Rick and I and everyone else tried to stay on top of things," Stepnoski said. "Even though the building is two stories, we tried to make use of the contour of the surrounding land to make it look not too high and as unobtrusive as possible. It's in a mostly residential area and we didn't want it sticking out and looking out of place too much."

Chris English can be reached at 215-949-4193 or [cenglish@phillyBurbs.com](mailto:cenglish@phillyBurbs.com).

*"Township's public works employees adjust to new home" Bucks County Courier Times 16 Oct 2009: B3*