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Piscataway Public Works Department Chooses Professionals To Train Employees For Commercial Drivers Licenses

Piscataway New Jersey's decision to outsource commercial drivers license training for its public works department employees is resulting in better training, safer drivers and reduced insurance risk.

Public Works Director believes the move will help the township continue its reputation as the top public works department in Middlesex County. The township, comprised of 19.1 square miles, is in the heart of a major transportation corridor about 35 miles from New York City. Since the opening of Interstate Highway 287 in 1960, the township has proven a highly desirable location for suburban development and many Fortune 500 corporations including Telcordia Technologies, Colgate Palmolive Technology Center, MCI World Com International, and Johnson & Johnson Health Systems are located in the township. The township's prime location with its easy access to the New Jersey Turnpike, the Garden State Parkway, Routes 287, 78, 22, 27, and 18 make it especially attractive to commuters and corporations alike. With that success has come some of the highest traffic volumes in the United States today.

Until 2006, the township public works department had conducted its own program to train employees for their commercial driver's license (CDL). A supervisor and four other workers served as trainers, leaving their regular responsibilities to train new employees or existing workers assigned to the DPW fleet.

Recent retirements and natural attrition made it necessary to train 12 new drivers and DPW Director _____ decided to engage a professional driver training school, Smith & Solomon of nearby Linden, New Jersey, to take over the training tasks. _____ allocated funds from his operational budget to cover the training costs. The average trainee completes the Smith & Solomon CDL training in five weeks with one week of classroom training and four weeks of training in the yard and on the road learning. Because of the DPW's manpower needs, the Piscataway program for each trainee was stretched out over nine weeks

The results have been worth it, _____ reports. "The need to meet state, county and local safety regulations made it a simple decision to hire a professional training organization that makes safety a major part of its five-week classroom and vehicular training," said _____. The training has also reduced the township's insurance exposures involving both public and private vehicles and property. "We are members of the Joint Insurance Fund administered by Commerce Risk and we adhere closely to their suggestions on how to reduce our risk," he explains. "I'm sure they are taking our CDL training program into account. Smith & Solomon's training program will impact our risk ratings and account for the level of our insurance premiums," he said.

"Everything has worked out very well. We are seeing better accountability, better coordination and better drivers," he concludes, noting "We shall definitely continue this program when we need to train our people for their CDLs."