

Pennsylvania Township Making Modern History

York Township places premium on versatile equipment.

Rich in history, York Township traces its beginnings to 1753, when it had relatively few settlers. Growth of the township proceeded slowly after the initial settlement, but the population now stands at 23,637, and it has been growing over the past 20 years at a rate of about 250 people per year. With a growing population inevitably came increased responsibilities for the township department of public works.

The York Township Department of Public Works employs 25 individuals. Responsibilities include all township infrastructure—roads, signs, sanitary sewer lines, storm sewer lines, traffic signals, etc. The annual budget is about \$7

million, and it continues to rise annually due to an aging sanitary sewer system and ever increasing development.

To handle its varied chores, the township's fleet consists of six Class 8 dump trucks, about a dozen or so light duty trucks, backhoes, a front end

In York Township, typically a street sweeper is only active two to three months out of the year; the same holds true for a roadside mower. With the Unimog and its seasonal implements the township utilizes the truck all year round. It was this versatility that convinced the township to purchase the implement carrier and its attachments.

Aside from its versatility, DePoe reports that the unit's rugged durability gives it the potential to handle some of the toughest weather and terrain.

The township's implements include a regenerative air sweeper, front-mount boom mower, drop-in spreader, dual-angle 11-ft plow, and the standard truck platform. The implements are straight forward to attach and remove by connecting and disconnecting hydraulic hoses, electrical connections, pins, bolts, etc. Depending on the implement, it takes two to three people to swap out. When not in use, the implements are stored in the equipment storage building along with the rest of the fleet.

Two crew members are the primary operators of the Unimog, as well as the lead mechanic, all of which are extremely satisfied with the unit's operation. Training was conducted by each of the implement providers. Ongoing training is provided by the dealer, Freightliner of Lancaster, PA.

York Township does the routine preventive maintenance on the unit. The dealer will handle out-of-the-ordinary



loader, a grader, a vacuum sewer truck, a TV inspection sewer van, roadside mowers, and two street sweepers. Two certified mechanics maintain this fleet, to which York Township has made a recent addition: a Unimog U500 multi-tool implement carrier (www.unimogtrucks.com).

This is the first Unimog York Township has purchased. When York Township Director of Public Works Scott DePoe began his career at the township in the spring 2004, the need for an additional sweeper as well as a replacement roadside mower was apparent. And with many newly adopted roads requiring maintenance each year the department of public works was always looking to increase the winter maintenance fleet. According to Depoe, the Unimog was a perfect fit because it took care of all three needs.



York Township's Unimog includes a regenerative air sweeper.

maintenance and warranty work. The township's lead mechanic attended a week long maintenance seminar in North Carolina this summer to learn more about the equipment.

Unimog features that municipalities find particularly applicable for local governments include:

- A choice of up to three hydraulic circuits with outlets on any or all sides of the vehicle.
- Four implement mounting areas—front, rear, between the axles, and behind the cab.
- Portal axles with hub reduction and front and rear axle differential locks for all-terrain travel. Interaxle differential locks are standard.
- Up to 24 forward and 18 reverse gears, enabling steady speeds from 0.09 mph for applications like roadside mowing up to 70 mph for rapid over-the-road deployment.
- VarioPilot® option, which enables the operator to switch steering and controls from the left side to the right side of the cab in less than a minute.
- Compact dimensions, maneuverability, and the visibility required to clearly see working implements.



Twenty-five individuals working for the York Township Department of Public Works are responsible for all township infrastructure.



The front-mount boom mower from Mulag on York Township's Unimog comes in handy for roadside maintenance operations.

Typical municipal attachments include a snowplow, salt spreader, street sweeper, shoulder mower, aerial lift, tree trimmer, brush hog, auger, and crane. A new street sweeper from Schwarze Industries (www.schwarze.com), a new combination mower from Mulag, and a new hooklift loader from Stellar Industries (www.stellarindustries.com) have recently been added to the implement lineup.

Although there are currently no plans to purchase a second unit, DePoe reports that based on what he has seen so far, he would not hesitate to purchase a second Unimog as needs arise. Should that occur, DePoe anticipates that the second unit would be dedicated to the sanitary sewer system, and would have a high pressure sewer cleaning implement as well as a snowplow and spreader.

Other organizations—both public and private—have been impressed with the Unimog's toughness and versatility:

- In Park City, UT, the equipment does the work of two trucks, even when it is being dedicated to snowplowing. Public Works Department Operations Manager, Pace Erickson, says that the streets of this former mining town are so narrow, and the elevation so steep, the Unimog's traction and unique turning radius

get it into and out of places with unequalled speed and efficiency. "And our drivers love it," he adds. "In no other vehicle could they ever see both corners of the plow at once."

- Peter Knight, president of Millenium Aviation—an airport and service facility for corporate aircraft in Reading, PA—immediately put three older vehicles up for sale after taking delivery of his Unimog and initial three attachments: snowblower, snowplow, and broom. Other tools, such as a mower and tree shredder, may follow. "Now I only have to insure and maintain one unit," he says. "And the Unimog allowed us to have a vehicle that we could drive on the road with the equipment. It's exceeded all my expectations."
- Crux Subsurface specializes in the most challenging logistics drilling programs. For them, Unimog is the last option to get into difficult and remote areas before they bring in the helicopters. "When we first tested it," said Production Manager Ken Edmunds, "the Unimog representative did maneuvers with it I'd never be comfortable doing. It's got more capability than I've got courage." **GE**