



News Advisory

Blue Water Area Transportation Commission

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Blue Water Area Transit Completes Busy Dispatch Area

To Create a More Efficient, Comfortable Work Environment

PORT HURON, MI — Blue Water Area Transit has just completed its Dispatch Area, the hub of activity where thousands of incoming calls arrive at the agency's Port Huron headquarters at 2121 Lapeer Avenue.

Up to six dispatch staff can now respond to the ongoing stream of telephone calls with questions about agency services, as well as requests for curb-side service by the agency's fleet of dial-a-ride buses. When BWAT moved into its current headquarters, the volume of incoming calls only required a staff of two dispatchers.

More than 350,000 "demand response" trips are provided each year for residents living in Burtchville, Port Huron, and Fort Gratiot Townships, as well as the city of Marysville. Depending on the time of day, staff can usually send a bus to someone's home within an hour.

"We hope the new modern work environment will help keep our dispatchers healthy and comfortable," says Jim Wilson, BWAT general manager.

The \$61,550 project has provided "state of the art" solutions to workplace issues such as noise and temperature levels within the room, as well as the impact of continually sitting in the same position, according to Dave Frasier, BWAT director of maintenance and procurement.

The Dispatch Area is now equipped with adjustable, ergonomic work stations that allow staff to sit or stand while talking on the phone. Carpeted walls and new heating and cooling systems have been installed to create a more controlled environment. Staff are also using new headphones to help modify the impact of noise.

"The job was completed on time and on budget," Frasier says, adding that the project used local labor and local vendors.

Blue Water Area Transit continues a proud tradition of innovation in public transit that has served Port Huron for more than a century. Port Huron was one of the nation's first communities to operate an electrified transit system in the 1880s and one of the first to operate motor coaches when they became popular in the 1930s. Following an eight-year hiatus, the current bus service began in September 1976. Since then, BWAT has carried more than 24 million riders.

BWAT has continued the tradition of innovation by producing its own compressed natural gas alternative fuel since 1996. It now ranks as Michigan's largest producer of compressed natural gas and runs the state's largest fleet of alternative fuel buses (75 out of a fleet of 79). For more information, visit our website at bwbus.com, our blog at bwwave.com, our facebook page at facebook.com/bluewaterbus, and our twitter page at twitter.com/bluewaterbus.

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