



## Records center utilizes massive mobile to extend records capacity



The Pennsylvania State Records Center (SRC) is the official repository for inactive or semi-active records that must be retained by agencies of the commonwealth for administrative, legal or fiscal purposes. Operated by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the center is a key component of the state's efforts to minimize the cost of managing information resources. With the original warehouse filled to capacity, commission staff recommended the construction of an annex that would utilize mobile shelving to maximize storage space.

Over the past nine years, agencies have transferred an average of 30,000 cubic feet of records to the center each year. Despite annual purging of approximately 24,000 cubic feet of obsolete records, the SRC gains a total of 6,000 cubic feet of additional records each year.

Kathy Smith, chief of the commission's Division of Records Administration and Image Services explained that the original warehouse, which utilizes static shelving, was out of storage space and couldn't accommodate the annual materials growth of 6,000 cubic feet. "We had land restrictions for our expansion and we needed to maximize the limited amount of available square feet. We decided to use mobile storage and to fully utilize the vertical space. We can store over 87,500 cubic-foot boxes in the 14,000 square foot annex storage area," she said.

"I was familiar with Spacesaver products from my 25 years of experience with state government," Smith explained. "As a part of the planning and design phase we examined all of the manufacturer specifications and visited other customer sites."

A powered Spacesaver system, designed with 38-foot carriages for maximum capacity, was selected for its ability to move thousands of pounds of records with the ease of a push-button control. The safety specified was the safety sweep system, which protects clerks when working down the long aisles. "Safety was a big factor and we like the safety features offered by Spacesaver," Smith said.

The Spacesaver system compacts records and promotes retrieval.





The mobile system maximizes record storage within the limited expansion space and fully utilizes warehouse vertical space.



With as many as 60 to 100 record requests a day and a required 24-hour response time, the center employs four full-time and three part-time stock clerks for record pulls. Unlike the original warehouse space, which still maintains two-thirds of the records, the mobile system compacts records into a smaller space and promotes retrieval by requiring shorter travel distances.

The extended shelving height stores boxes 16-high, as compared to the original warehouse shelving at 11 boxes high. The carriages were specially designed to be 64-inches wide to accommodate extra deep back-to-back shelving to hold the record boxes. The wider carriages minimized the required number of aisles by 50 percent, thereby facilitating record access.

Spacesaver provided operation and maintenance training for the record center employees. Smith said the training was an important part of the overall service because

it helped her staff adjust to the new movable shelving and learn how to operate it safely.

Smith explained that the local Spacesaver representative provided excellent service. "They worked with us to design the most efficient use of space and were very accommodating to provide several floor plan revisions," she said.

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Chief of the Commission's  
Division of Records Administration  
and Image Services

"We are very pleased with the Spacesaver systems," Smith said. "They have helped us maximize our capacity within the limited space we had available in the new annex."

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