

Fresh digs: Alton Post Office reflects on first week at new location

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June 6 2016 5:00 AM



ALTON - Postal Service users are positively adjusting to the Alton post office's recent move.

After being evicted from its old location on Belle Street, the Alton post office moved to the old **Piasa Lincoln Mercury** building on Tuesday, located at **2350 Homer Adams Parkway** in Alton. The move was due to a lease between the post office and **Ameren** expiring at the end of a 50 year term. The post office was given the option to buy the building at the end of the lease, but declined partially due to environmental conditions at the site.

"There used to be a power plant there," said **William Perkins**, who has been with the U. S. Postal Service for 20 years. "They didn't have the environmental checks and balances then they do now, so about 30 feet down, there is some bad dirt."



The Environmental Protective Agency will be managing the clean-up at the old site. The new site, however, does not have the same issues or problems. **Alton Postmaster Paula Webster** said the new location has worked well for customers and employees alike. She cited the lack of asbestos and lead paint in the new building as a plus for the safety of all those who enter.

"Everybody has been pretty receptive to it," she said. "Some people have to get used to it. We're only three miles away from our former location, which is not any farther than people go to eat lunch. Instead of coming here first thing in the morning, some people

may come a bit later when they get something to eat. I would have preferred something closer to our former location, but there was not a facility large enough."



The new location is 6,000 square feet smaller than the former post office, but due to automation, less space is needed. It does have ample space, however, for the 39 postal vehicles in the Alton post office's fleet as well as the 70 employees and numerous customers.

Many of the customers entering the post office Friday morning seemed pleased with the modern location. Perkins said the updated veneer and bright colors make the mood in the post office a little brighter.

"It's a bright, open, airy and fantastic atmosphere," he said. "It has a very positive attitude."

Webster and Perkins were both concerned by the intersection of Homer Adams and Humbert Road. Each said they were concerned about the safety of their patrons at that particular intersection.

As of now, the new location is working at full function, minus a usable phone system. Due to some misunderstandings with the move, the phones at the new post office are not currently functioning. When the phones are restored, which Webster said should happen soon, the post office can be reached at (618) 462-2501.