

# After fire, Geneva bank puts in place mobile offices

By Linda Girardi For The Beacon-News November 1, 2012 1:14PM



Contractors with Recovery Solutions put the finishing touches on the entrance to a mobile banking facility in the parking lot of the State Bank of Geneva on Monday, October, 29, 2012, after its main building was recently damaged in a fire. | Jeff Cagle~For Sun-Times Media

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GENEVA — The State Bank of Geneva is going mobile after fire caused major interior damage to the first floor lobby and service offices last week.

“Something like this is bound to be chaotic but we are implementing our recovery plan step-by-step,” said Lew Deal, bank president and CEO.

Deal anticipates it will be several months before the bank building at 22 S. Fourth St. in downtown Geneva is gutted and restored for bank business.

In the meantime, preparations have been made to move the bank into a temporary mobile unit next to the main building.

Geneva firefighters responded at 3 a.m. Oct. 24 to an automatic fire alarm and contained the blaze to a first-floor office in the northwest corner of the two-story brick building.

Geneva Fire Department investigators, along with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, determined the cause was accidental, most likely caused by a damaged electrical cord extension. Damage to the building and contents was estimated at about \$485,000, according to the fire department.

The fire caused significant smoke and water damage on the first floor and lesser damage to the rest of the building. The safety deposit boxes were “unscathed” and protected within the bank’s vault, Deal said.

Despite the industrial fans blowing, there is a film of black soot across the main lobby and office furnishings and the smell of smoke is apparent.

Bank officials are removing what was salvageable from their desks and connecting computers to the temporary mobile unit located in the front parking lot at the corner of South Fourth and James streets, with the assistance of an area company that specializes in disaster recovery for financial institutions.

A crew from Recovery Solutions of Plainfield, a national disaster recovery company, is converting the mobile stand-alone unit into a bank by equipping it with three teller counters, a reception area and four private offices, as well as all of the necessary technology – servers and work stations.

“We provide that turn-key solution to financial institutions to restore full operations,” said Rick Lavin, president and CEO of Recovery Solutions.

Lavin, who formerly sold computer equipment to financial institutions, opened his business on the cusp of federal regulators establishing new mandates on disaster recovery plans for financial institutions.

Lavin said the company has established temporary sites for banks hit by all kinds of disasters, from fires to hurricanes.

The crew connected electric power and cables from the existing bank’s secured house server room in the basement that was not damaged, to the 24- by 60-foot cedar-sided mobile unit.

The State Bank of Geneva plans to open an annex office at 11 N. Fifth St. for its loan and trust departments, until the interior of the first floor of the building is gutted and restored and the other areas are cleaned and restored.

“Our staff is working, either on clean-up efforts or providing customer service and doing the necessary banking work. Employees are just not in their normal locations, but customers can do their banking,” Deal said.

Deal suggested customers seeking personal banking assistance call the bank at 630-232-3200 for the location of the service they are requesting.

In business since 1903, the bank’s original location was in the “Bank Block” building at 229 W. State St. In 1925 it relocated to 302 W. State St. In 1978, it moved into a modern building on South Fourth Street.