

# NJ insurer stretches into Pa. market

By Joel Berg, Central Penn Business Journal

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A New Jersey insurer is angling for business in Pennsylvania as it looks to grow beyond the Garden State.

West Trenton, N.J.-based NJM Insurance Co. is ramping up efforts to market and sell personal and workers' compensation insurance in Pennsylvania, said John Hardiman, a spokesman for NJM.

"As we think about what is the next right step for our company, proactively expanding deeper into Pennsylvania makes a lot of sense," said Hardiman.

NJM already has been selling insurance in Pennsylvania, but only to customers who requested it, Hardiman said. Now it is beginning to advertise its products, in both traditional and digital media.

Founded in 1913 as New Jersey Manufacturers Casualty Insurance Co., NJM offers workers' comp, commercial auto and a range of personal insurance products, including auto, homeowners and renters. The company's commercial auto policies will not be available in Pennsylvania.

Its foray into Pennsylvania will initially be limited to the Philadelphia region, including Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties, Hardiman said. It plans to expand westward, but does not have a specific timetable, he added.

NJM sells both directly to customers as well as through independent agents.

The company's challenge in Pennsylvania is to establish its brand, he said. "It's a new market for us."

The company employs about 1,700 people in West Trenton and another 800 at offices in Parsippany and Hammonton, both in New Jersey. Its premium volume is about \$1.7 billion, Hardiman said, with about \$1 billion coming from personal lines.

The company is not planning a Pennsylvania office, figuring it can serve the Philadelphia region from its existing facilities, Hardiman said. But, he added, "As we get farther out into western Pa., it might make more sense do to that."