

CNC Lathe machine uses a 12-tool turret station that rotates to make the parts; it has a durable plastic door to shield out flying debris.



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER YEHL

RRC's New High-Tech Machine Turns Out Precision Bus Parts

By JENNIFER YEHL

(April 4, 2003) Support Shops mechanics at the Regional Rebuild Center (RRC) recently acquired a high-tech machine capable of automatically producing and replacing tools and automotive parts within minutes.

Manufactured by HAAS Automation Inc. of Ventura, the CNC Lathe can turn out replacements for rare, expensive and irregular-shaped parts on the spot, eliminating the hassle of having to order and wait for the parts to be delivered.

"In the past we had to throw away and replace big expensive parts, but now we can just repair them," says Support Shops Machinist Fred Wenzel. "Repairing something only costs a few dollars as compared to spending much more for a new part."

The \$108,000 lathe is specifically designed to make tools that are round, such as bolts, plates and bushings. It is also capable of repairing pieces such as the threading of a worn-out part.

To run the machine, the part is first drawn up on a computer. The machine software then illustrates the entire operation and transfers the information to the CNC Lathe.



The operation is first drawn on a computer before being processed to the CNC Lathe.

Below, the CNC Lathe can make parts, such as bushings used for gear housings, in as little as two and a half minutes.



"This machine has increased our capabilities for doing things," says Bill Delloso, Support Shops Equipment Maintenance supervisor. "The machine requires one person to do a job that usually takes two to three people to do. It saves a lot of time and can do a lot of things that we cannot do by hand"

[Back to Bulletin Board](#)