

## [Mike Troy - skrewconventional.blogspot.com](http://skrewconventional.blogspot.com)

**Basic Stats:** <http://skrewconventional.blogspot.com/>

- What is(are) your name(s)? **Mike Troy**
- What do you do for a living? **Caregiver for physically and mentally disabled**
- How many people do you/will be living in your tiny house? **1**. What part of the country do you live in? **Western Pennsylvania.**
- How many square feet is your house? **140 approx.**
- When did you start your build? **October, 2012**
- Is your house complete? **No, as of August, 2013**
- Have you been documenting your tiny house build and if so, where can people find that information? **Yes from the beginning...**

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**Background:**

- Why did you decide to build? **I want to do “stuff” more than have “stuff”**
- What was your life like before your tiny house? **I think I may have had “some” spare time (when it’s building season there is almost none)** Were you fairly active, have you always had ‘projects’ going on? **Yes I keep pretty busy.** Were you fairly sedentary and looking for a change? **No.** Did you tend to work too much? **Yes I worked a lot and still do.** (This question is an effort at trying to figure out WHO gravitates to the tiny house lifestyle)
- How did you come to hear about the movement, figure out it was right for you and get started? **I was searching for house designs when I came across Tumbleweeds Tiny Houses. That was about 4 years ago or more. I kept searching but when the Fencil came out I knew it was for me.**

- What is/was your design inspiration? **I went to a Tumbleweed workshop with Jay Shafer leading. Took lots of notes and saved money for a few years and now I'm building.**

***Technical:***

- How do/did you find the time to work on your house with a job, kid(s), relationships, AND building a house? **I took two weeks of vacation to get it jump started and then worked to get it ready to withstand winter weather almost constantly. There were setbacks of course, the first was it rained continuously the first week of my vacation. That was not helpful. Did you do anything special to keep the balance? No, it seems like that's all I did last fall. This spring there wasn't as much pressure since it was essentially water proof but now I'm trying to get a good push.**
- Have you run into any problems with your local codes? **I did get a letter from my township stating a shed was being built on the property with no permits on file. I took a few pictures in to show it was on wheels and she agreed that a permit wasn't needed. She was nice enough and agreed to let me finish the build and then move it out, which is my plan.**
- Where did you get the tools that you use? Were they yours, borrowed, rented etc.? **I had some, borrowed from neighbors, dad, and sister. I also bought some new.**
- How long did (are you expecting) construction to take? **About 6 months (not counting the winter when it sat idle)**
- Have you/were you able to stay on schedule? **No, every phase took longer than I thought. I'm at about 6 months now. It's a journey and I'm fairly patient.**
- What is/was the most time consuming portion of your build? **Right now the siding is way more involved than I thought. I'm using Hardy cement board that looks like cedar shingles. Regular cedar boards would've been a lot quicker.**

- What is/was the most limiting factor for your build? **The learning curve for each phase.**
- Is your house on a trailer? If yes, how do you attach to the trailer? How do you move your tiny house? (Do you have a truck, do you hire it done?) **It's on a trailer. I'm not planning on moving it often so I'll just rent a U-haul when it's time. I have a double deck on my build with the first deck nestled in the steel frame of the trailer. It's securely bolted and hurricane tied on. The second deck is also bolted and hurricane tied to the first deck and trailer.**
- Do you have accessory houses/dwellings that you use to supplement storage/working/living? **I live in the family home I grew up in and it will be listed for sale soon.**
- Where did you get your plans? **Tumbleweed**
- Have you consulted any 'professionals'? (structural, mechanical, plumbing, design etc.)? **Not really but I decided I will seek a certified electrician to relieve me of that phase.**
- Are you insuring your house? **I tried, but it's uninsurable since it's not built by a certified manufacturer.** With who?
- Have you been using any sponsorships to help fund your house? **No, after my initial material purchase it has been pay as I go.** How do you go about finding that sponsorship?

***Specifics:***

- What sort of items do you have for cooking? **I'm going to go with an electric induction cook top.**
- Are you tied to the power grid or are you off grid? **I will need an electrical hook up.**
- Are you going to have a washer and/or dryer? **No**

- Where does your water come from? **Where ever I move the house I would like there to be a water hook up. If not, it would have to be a really great situation for me to haul water in.**
- What kind of toilet are you going to have? A lovable **loo from The Humanure Handbook. I picked it up myself and met Joe Jenkins personally. It works great and doesn't smell at all... Yes, I tried it out and also had two batches of humanure. Perfect humus.**
- What do you use for a heat source if anything? **I will use two portable electric heaters. 1, is an enclosed oil filled radiator type. The other is like an edenpure (I forget the name brand of mine). Both have thermostats and both work great. One should be enough except in the coldest of weather.**
- What are some of the space savings tricks you used? **I haven't started the inside yet but I've been looking at many builds for ideas.**
- What do you have for insulation? **1" and 2" foam board for a total of 3" of insulation on the walls and roof. Since I have a double deck the floor has 6" to keep the toes toasty.**
- Where are you planning to park your tiny house? **Looking but I probably have at least a temporary location available. It'll be western Pa or eastern Ohio.**

#### **Personal:**

- How much will/did your tiny house cost? **I have all the receipts but haven't added them up to date. I'm guessing between 22 and 25k. Depends on how the inside goes, like what I find or what materials I use.**
- What is/was the most expensive part of your house? **First the trailer then the windows**
- 'Best' injury story (worst injury)? **I smacked my pinky finger pretty good but I don't know how because it happened during a fight with a single bee trying to get me.**

- What has been your biggest accomplishment with your tiny house? **I'd say getting the roof beam up because I had no idea how that was going to go.**
- What is/will be the biggest benefit to living in a tiny house? **More funds available to do interesting things.**
- Is there anything you'll miss about living in a standard house? What will you miss the most? **I really don't think I can answer that yet but right now I don't think I will miss anything about it.**
- What has been the scariest part about building your own house? **I had a fear of not finishing but now I see the light at the end of the tunnel.**
- If you could change one thing about your house what would it be? **Hmm, that's a tough one. I mentioned siding earlier, it's more time consuming than I thought but since it's looking pretty good I'm glad I did it. Other than that so far I'm happy with my project for me.**
- Did you have cash in hand to complete your build, pay as you go or take out a loan to construct your house? **I had most of the cash for all the shell materials except a small amount I put on credit. I sold my vehicle to get over the top on that. The rest of the way is pay as I go.**
- Have friends and family been skeptical or supportive of your ideas? **Mostly supportive, and as it takes shape I'm sure I got some people thinking...**
- Is there anything else you would want other people to know about your house and build? **I'm hoping to have an open house at the end of September 2013. It won't be finished on the inside but I'm hoping the siding and door will be on by then.**