

610

EIGHTEENTH
ANNUAL REPORT
1973 - 1974

**DEPARTMENT OF
BUILDING INSPECTION**

**VINCENT DIMASE, P. E.
DIRECTOR**



IN CITY COUNCIL
NOV 21 1974

READ:
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

Vincent Dimase

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PROVIDENCE, R.I.

CITY OF PROVIDENCE
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION
112 Union Street

E I G H T E E N T H A N N U A L R E P O R T

1973 - 1974

VINCENT DiMASE, P.E.
DIRECTOR

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July 27, 1974

The Honorable Joseph A. Doorley, Jr., Mayor
and The Honorable City Council
City of Providence, Rhode Island

Gentlemen:

The Eighteenth Annual Report of operations, work carried on, and achievements of the Department of Building Inspection during the year 1973-1974 is hereby submitted as required by ordinance.

The details of the operations of the Department are covered in the following reports of each of the divisions.

Our accomplishments, such as they may be, reflect our continuing vigilance to keep pace with new developments in all facets of the building construction industry.

During the past year the permit valuations amounted to \$25,925,380.77. The Department collected \$156,650.25 in permit fees.

The continued assistance and cooperation received by the Department from you has aided greatly in the realization of the accomplishments described herein. With your continued cooperation and counsel and through the conscientious efforts of the employees of this Department, we shall continue to improve the quality and efficiency of the services we render in the interest of public safety.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent DiMase
Vincent DiMase, P.E.

Director

WHY HAVE A BUILDING CODE?

The nature and conditions under which most individuals come in contact with building codes frequently leads to misunderstanding of the reasons for such regulations. The first experience many persons have with the building code in their community is when they are prevented by the code from doing what they want. The natural reaction of each of us when we are told, "you can't do this", is to try that much harder to do it. When a law, with which we are not familiar, is responsible for this situation, our natural reaction is that the law is not good. But, just because we are displeased for the present with the law, we really have no justifiable reason to condemn it.

Governments are responsible to provide protection for the people whom they serve and by whom they are elected. This is why they have police departments, sheriffs and deputies, and many other of the municipal functions which watch over the lives and property of the people of the community. As a part of its police power, the government must look after the construction and remodeling of buildings---not for the purpose of forcing upon the public some individual's ideas of construction and design---but to be sure that buildings will be strong and enduring; that they will have adequate light, ventilation and sanitary facilities; that they will be reasonably free from fire hazards; and that each property owner's rights are equally respected.

This is accomplished through a law known as the building code. A good building code, well administered, is one of the best assurances for the orderly development of a community; the

prevention of slums and blight; the safeguarding of life, health and property.

Where buildings of private ownership and use are well separated from each other there is minimum hazard resulting from their construction and use. As communities become more congested and buildings are occupied by numerous persons, these hazards increase substantially. Great changes have taken place in the past few years. The country has changed from a rural to a metropolitan community. There have been great advances in construction materials and technology. More building components are now factory fabricated and delivered to the site as large units. Home building has been transformed from a craft to an industry providing houses before sale, instead of custom building them for prior purchasers.

Modern manufacturing techniques demand large, clear-span open buildings to accommodate assembly-line techniques and mechanical handling devices. To satisfy these requirements, industry is moving out into the country, purchasing large tracks of land for modern manufacturing buildings. Home building follows such developments, absorbing additional acreage to permit mass production of houses. Commercial development results, to provide services for the families of the factory workers who occupy the homes.

As a consequence, building codes, which were once considered only necessary in large cities, are now required in smaller communities, particularly those surrounding urban centers where

here-to-fore rural townships are rapidly being transformed into bustling suburban villages and small cities with many of the problems and hazards of the central urban areas. Unfortunately, few areas recognize these conditions until they have been substantially started.

What Should the Building Code Do?

Since building codes directly affect the property rights of individuals, it is important that they be properly drafted and well administered. They should be established and enforced by the unit of government closest to the people affected by them consistent with the ability to establish efficient administrative organization.

The building code is a law to provide for the safety of those who occupy or pass adjacent to any building; and to prevent a neighbor from building something that will be an undue hazard to an individual's property, or that individual from unduly hazarding his neighbor's property. It imposes certain limitations on individual rights for the greatest benefit to all concerned. Because it affects the lives, personal liberties and property rights of every citizen, the extent of the regulations must be carefully defined; they must be minimum requirements for safe and enduring construction, not maximum design specifications.

The building code is not an engineering manual; it is not a guide to the "do-it-yourself" enthusiast, although it will materially assist both of these. Ordinary, good construction, using sound materials will generally meet the requirements of a

good building code. There is little reason to believe that an ordinary citizen, possessing elementary knowledge of the use of materials and tools, could not build his own house, garage, or shed in conformity with a good building code if he chose to do so. At the same time such a code would be a measure of assurance to him of a safe and sound building if he chooses to have it built for him by another. It must be noted, however, that the building code is not intended to secure optimum conditions; to guarantee the best possible construction or even the best workmanship or materials. Rather, it establishes minimum standards of safety for varying conditions of use and type of construction of buildings for the general communal good.

How Building Codes Developed

For many years the only tangible method of preparing building regulations was by the use of local voluntary professional talent. This method was subject to certain abuses. The men who comprised local building code committees frequently injected into the codes which they prepared their own personal prejudices, many of which may have only remote relation to safety. Such committees were particularly vulnerable to pressures from local industry and commercial interests, so that their judgment was often influenced by the desire to be a "good neighbor". Lacking detail knowledge on certain subjects, these committees were also often influenced by free advice from vested interests.

The results were two-fold: the broader aspects of public benefit which the building code is supposed to serve, were often suppressed by regulations favoring special interests; and such activities inevitably produced differing requirements even in closely adjoining communities. Neither of these could be justified as suitable governmental service to the public.

To overcome this undesirable situation, organizations of public officials developed building codes that can be adopted by local governments. One of these organizations is --- BOCA International (Building Officials and Code Administrators International). In 1956 Providence adopted a new Building Code, patterned after BOCA Code.

The BOCA Building Codes were first published after more than five years of comprehensive study. They are the product of the combined thinking of more than ninety men in public offices of nearly as many cities, towns, villages, counties or states from all parts of the country. They were reviewed and criticized by the most qualified persons industry could find in the numerous branches of the construction field. They were revised and re-studied until it was generally agreed that they provided sound, minimum performance requirements for safety and endurance, commensurate with good enforcement techniques.

But it was realized that the ingenuity of the construction industry and continued research and development would produce conditions, materials and methods that could not be envisioned when the codes were first published. Therefore, provision was

made to keep them up-to-date by a system of annual review and approval of changes. This is carried on with the same sincerity of purpose and careful scrutiny that characterized the initial development of the codes. The results are made available to local governments in convenient and economical form for adoption as amendments to the codes where they have been adopted.

Numerous other services are supplied to assist local administrators of codes in recognizing the qualities of materials and products, determining compliance with the code requirements, and keeping up-to-date with developments in the construction industry.

Vincent DiMase, P.E.
Past President
BOCA International

THE BUILDING OFFICIAL

The building official is an elected or appointed public officer responsible for the administration and enforcement of the various codes regulating construction, use or occupancy of buildings and structures - public or private. His primary responsibility is to assure that the safety and health of the public is maintained through adherence to those requirements established by law in the construction or use of every building in the community. This includes buildings in which people live, eat, sleep, play, work, worship, study, recuperate, or are entertained. It even includes those buildings which restrict liberties - prisons and similar institutions. Stated more simply - all buildings of a municipality. Inherent in all of these facilities, even the most ornate and costly, are characteristics that, if installed without proper controls, could pose threats to life, health or safety. In order to minimize such a possibility to every extent possible, the building official is invested with considerable authority. His knowledge, competence, experience, and the manner in which he assumes his responsibilities and exercises his authority make a significant difference between attainment of the safety contemplated by the codes, or missing built-in, hidden and insidious danger that, like dormant volcanoes, are unpredictable and deadly.

An individual aspiring to become a building official, who lacks training, experience and education in ALL aspects of construction, particularly related to code requirements, should be

considered to be deficient. Municipalities considering the employment of an individual to run a Building Department would be well advised to utilize a panel of experienced Building Officials to assist them in making a proper selection.

Personal deficiencies are alleviated to some extent when a department has a properly qualified staff of experts occupying key positions, but this is the exception rather than the rule.

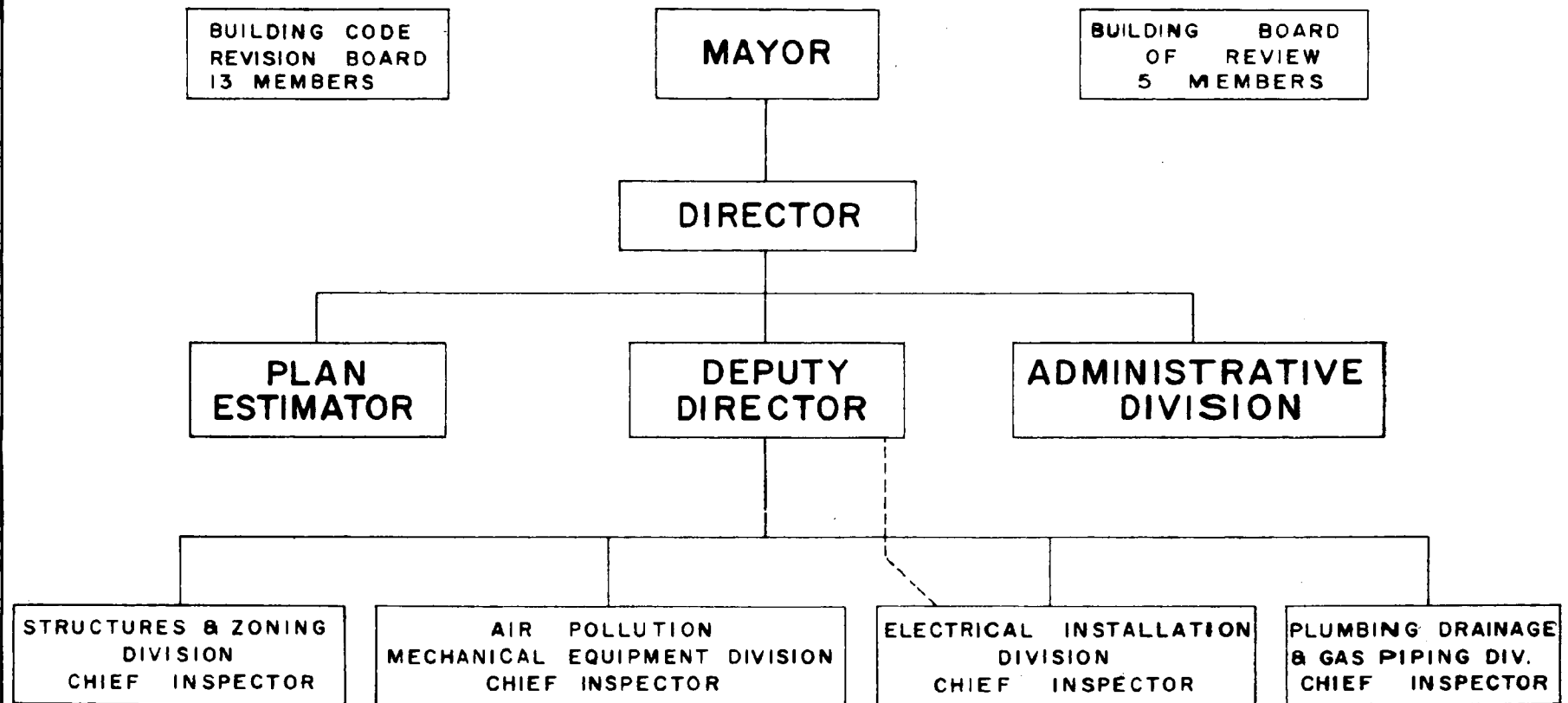
The duties of the Building Official are to organize, plan, coordinate, train, direct, control, review, and to represent his municipality as its expert in the field of code administration and enforcement. He is responsible for its smooth and proper performance and, likewise, accountable for all its actions - good and bad.

If one were to compare objectively the duties, responsibilities and knowledge requirements of a Building Official with other municipal administrators, it is fairly certain that the comparison would show some startling differences. In no other field of municipal administration are the responsibilities of administrators as diverse and demanding as those imposed on the person responsible for the function of the Building Department.

The effective and successful Administrator requires skills in many different and unrelated disciplines, including the physical sciences, political science, law, hygiene, administration, and perhaps most important, human relations.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

ORGANIZATION CHART



DIVISION OF STRUCTURES AND ZONING

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Sir:

I respectfully submit for your information and consideration, a report of the work of the Division of Structures and Zoning, for the Fiscal Year from July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974.

Attached hereto are two tables setting forth by types of occupancies, the number of building and miscellaneous structures, including the estimated costs, for which permits were issued. The table marked "New Work" contains data pertaining to the construction of new buildings and miscellaneous structures. The table marked "Additions and Alterations" contains data pertaining to building operations on existing buildings in order to provide additional space or to make interior changes to satisfy current and anticipated needs.

The estimated costs as set forth herein, taken from the accompanying tables, do not include the costs of heating, plumbing, and electrical installations.

ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDING OPERATIONS BY MONTHS 19
NEW

MONTHS	DWELLING 1 FAMILY	DWELLING 2 FAMILY	MULTI FAMILY	CHURCHES HOMES, ETC.	AMUSEMENT & RECREATION	OFFICE BLDG. & BANKS	PUBLIC AND MUNI.	SCHOOLS	GASOLINE STATIONS	GARAGES	STORES	STORE- HOUSES	MFG. AND SHOPS	OIL BURNERS	MISC	TOTAL
JULY <i>Jan.</i>	158,000	20,000							55,000							233000
AUG. <i>Feb.</i>	86,000	58,000								1,400	12000					157400
SEPT. <i>Mar.</i>	45,000	92,500				368000					4300				3,000	512800
OCT. <i>Apr.</i>	61,000	17,000	340200	1163000	80,000	700000				2,000					8,000	2371200
NOV. <i>May</i>	152,000										25000		95000		4,300	276300
DEC. <i>June</i>	43,000		114000			1722400		1830000		8,500	50000		915200			4683100
JAN. <i>July</i>	68,000									3,000			1000			72000
FEB. <i>Aug.</i>	63,000	82,500	1448500							2,000					10,000	1606000
MAR. <i>Sept.</i>	74,000								50,000	22,200	50000		68000			264200
APR. <i>Oct.</i>	56,000	22,000														78000
MAY. <i>Nov.</i>	103,000	17,000								4,500			23500			148000
JUNE <i>Dec.</i>	41,000	18,000		12000						7,700	20000		324000			422700
TOTALS	950,000	327,000	1902700	1175000	80,000	2790400	-	1830000	105,000	51,300	161300	-	1426700	-	25,300	10824700
PERMITS																
JULY <i>Jan.</i>	12	1							1							14
AUG. <i>Feb.</i>	6	3								1	1					11
SEPT. <i>Mar.</i>	3	5				1					1				1	11
OCT. <i>Apr.</i>	4	1	2	1	1	1				1					1	12
NOV. <i>May</i>	9										1		2		2	14
DEC. <i>June</i>	3		1	1		1		3		2	1		1			12
JAN. <i>July</i>	2									1			1			4
FEB. <i>Aug.</i>	4	4	12							1					2	23
MAR. <i>Sept.</i>	4								2	3	1		2			12
APR. <i>Oct.</i>	4	1														5
MAY <i>Nov.</i>	4	1								1			1			7
JUNE <i>Dec.</i>	3	1		1						3	1		4			13
TOTALS	58	17	15	2	1	3		3	3	13	6		11		6	138

ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDING OPERATIONS BY MONTHS 19

ALTERATIONS

MONTHS	DWELLING 1 FAMILY	DWELLING 2 FAMILY	MULTI FAMILY	CHURCHES HOMES, ETC.	AMUSEMENT & RECREATION	OFFICE BLDGS. & BANKS	PUBLIC AND MUNI.	SCHOOLS	GASOLINE STATIONS	GARAGES	STORES	STORE- HOUSES	MFG. AND SHOPS	OIL BURNERS	MISC	TOTAL
JULY																
AUG.	79700	34400	48600	-	37800	30200	-	24000	-	300	68200	-	87400	-	42600	453200
SEPT.	32100	34500	7400	-	-	107300	-	40600	59000	-	22900	5000	128500	-	26900	464200
OCT.	61000	43300	56300	99600	-	758000	-	-	200	-	26300	-	107600	-	300	1152600
NOV.	23700	23500	26700	1310500	20000	276900	-	-	1300	300	44400	-	46800	-	2000	1776100
DEC.	40200	31500	6000	10900	-	77500	-	3000	400	-	40000	-	186200	-	2600	398300
JAN.	68600	15800	18200	225000	-	372000	-	4200	-	700	27600	-	15000	-	17200	764300
FEB.	38600	25000	38800	4200	-	40100	-	200000	8100	-	53700	-	12500	-	5600	426600
MAR.	31500	29400	19500	200	-	39300	-	-	6000	-	89300	-	17000	-	3100	235300
APR.	28800	47400	36400	40000	-	127400	-	10000	1500	1600	19600	-	11800	-	2700	327200
MAY	46800	41100	25300	60000	22000	48600	-	-	15000	4100	78300	-	116200	-	6700	464100
JUNE	123700	46200	30100	39000	-	51900	-	201500	-	1100	23100	-	39600	-	-	556200
JULY	43700	61600	123100	10000	-	131100	-	3500	-	-	54100	-	113600	-	2000	542700
TOTALS	618400	433700	436400	1799400	79800	2060300	-	486800	91500	8100	547500	5000	882200	-	111700	7560800
PERMITS																
JULY	40	23	20	-	2	7	-	2	-	1	13	-	6	-	9	123
AUG.	21	18	11	-	-	5	-	3	5	-	7	1	7	-	6	84
SEPT.	20	24	19	3	-	3	-	-	1	-	6	-	3	-	1	80
OCT.	17	19	18	3	1	5	-	-	2	1	7	-	4	-	3	80
NOV.	18	19	7	2	-	3	-	1	1	-	12	-	6	-	3	72
DEC.	17	15	6	2	-	4	-	1	-	1	14	-	6	-	3	69
JAN.	11	13	15	1	-	7	-	1	4	-	7	-	4	-	1	64
FEB.	20	11	7	1	-	8	-	-	2	-	9	-	8	-	4	70
MAR.	19	23	12	3	-	6	-	1	1	3	11	-	7	-	3	89
APR.	29	22	13	2	1	11	-	-	5	4	22	-	10	-	5	124
MAY	40	30	16	9	-	6	-	5	-	4	15	-	8	-	-	133
JUNE	27	28	17	1	-	5	-	2	-	-	12	-	11	-	1	104
TOTALS	279	245	161	27	4	70	-	16	21	14	135	1	80	-	39	1092

From the tables, the estimated cost of construction for the fiscal year from July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974 is as follows:

New Buildings	Permits 138
Estimated Cost	\$10,824,700.00
Additions & Alterations	Permits 1092
Estimated Cost	\$7,560,800.00
Total Estimated Cost of Construction	\$18,385,500.00

Permits (not included in tables) issued during the period from July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974 are as follows:

Razing of Dilapidated Buildings	Permits 371
Sandblasting of Buildings	Permits 8
Moving of Buildings	Permits 5
Erection of Billboards	Permits 19
Erection of Wall Signs	Permits 72
Erection of Signs Over Sidewalks	Permits 74
Erection of Fire Escapes	Permits 17
Construction of Vaults	Permits 0
Storage of Dangerous Chemicals	Permits 21
Storage of Petroleum Products in Bulk	Permits 1
Total	588

(Total Permits Issued During the Fiscal Year ~~1818~~)

Total number of buildings demolished in the City was 371,
a total of approximately 556 dwelling units.

During the fiscal year, 277 family units were added as a result
of private buildings activities.

The additional units are grouped as follows:

(a) New Buildings

One Family	58 Family Units
Two Family	34 Family Units
Multiple Family	163 Family Units

(b) Conversions 22 Family Units

Total	277
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The total fees collected during the year July 1, 1973 to
June 30, 1974, amounted to \$82,968.84. During the fiscal year
this Department processed 2050 building and zoning violations,
including South Providence and East Side Renewal Project Areas.
The Field Inspection Section of the Division conducted 19,750
construction inspection and violation investigations.

During the fiscal year, this Division reviewed the design and plans for many major structures. The following are buildings for which permits were issued with a declared estimated cost of \$50,000.000 or more:

135 Dodge St. Bannister House Nursing & Administration	\$1,722,000.00
99 Plain St. R. I. Nursing Care Center Nursing Home	1,163,000.00
298-308 Thayer St. Brown University Dormitory (72 Rooms & Stores)	1,153,000.00
593 Eddy Street R. I. Hospital Generator Room	915,200.00
593 Eddy Street R. I. Hospital Hospital Addition (Key Stone Bldg.)	890,000.00
520-534 No. Main St. Moshassuck Sq. Development Offices & Stores	740,000.00
10 Greene St. Telephone Credit Union Offices	700,000.00
233 Bowen St. Brown University Dormitory (35 Units)	476,000.00
593 Eddy St. R. I. Hospital Radiation Therapy Bldg.	418,000.00
201 Charles St. American Mathematical Office Bldg.	368,000.00
40 Stenton Ave. Stenton Manor Apts. Apts. (46 Units)	300,000.00

49 Westminster St. R. I. Hospital Trust Bank & Offices	270,000.00
Camp St. University Heights 18 Apts.	256,500.00
42 Haswell St. Marshall Contr. Inc. Warehouse	217,000.00
50 Maude St. Prov. Lying In Hospital Hospital	210,000.00
223 Bowen St. Brown University Dormitory (22 Rooms)	210,000.00
87 Porspect St. Brown University Dormitory (Addition)	200,000.00
150 So. Main St. Old Stone Bank Bank	190,000.00
Camp St. University Heights 12 Apts.	171,000.00
Camp St. University Heights 12 Apts.	171,000.00
Camp St. University Heights 10 Apts.	142,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 14 Apts.	119,500.00
Camp St. University Heights Apts. (8 Units)	114,000.00
225 Carolina Ave. Prov. Chain Co. Mfg.	100,000.00

401 Elmgrove Ave. Jewish Community Center Office & Com. Center	100,000.00
252 Allens Ave. J. F. Donovan Chem. Storage	100,000.00
11-19 Congdon St. Congdon St. Bapt. Church Church	88,000.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
Camp St. University Heights 6 Apts.	85,500.00
10 Admiral St. Union Paper Co. Mfg. & Warehouse	80,000.00
25 Mill St. Stillman-White Foundry Assoc. Drafting Offices	80,000.00
2 Washington Ave. David Friedman Cooking School	75,000.00
47-51 Jackson St. Reynolds Regency Corp. 3 Apts.	75,000.00

40 Daniel Ave. IJ DJ Realty Co. Apt. (4)	75,000.00
38 Brown St. Brown University Alumni Center	70,000.00
80 Public St. City Tire Co. Truck Service Center	70,000.00
245-257 DuPont Dr. Foremost Lithograph Printing	70,000.00
40 Westminster St. First Hartford Realty Bank & Offices	66,000.00
359 Eddy St. Leavitt Colson Co., Inc. Electrical Wholesale & Offices	60,000.00
Corner Charles, Chalkstone, Connanicut & Ashburton Sts. Gas Station	55,000.00
49 Westminster St. R. I. Hospital Trust Bank & Offices	53,200.00
173 Wickenden St. Adlers Army & Navy Store Hardware Store	50,000.00
85 Brown St. Brown University Research Lab	50,000.00
120 Prospect St. James Dyers 1 Family Dwelling	50,000.00
2 Washington Ave. David Friedman Cooking School & Offices	50,000.00
40 Rathbone Street Gov. Dyers Market Farmer's Produce Market	50,000.00

2 Woodland Terrace
Joe Esposito
1 Family Dwelling

50,000.00

300 Chalkstone Ave.
Ace Auto Body
Body Shop

50,000.00

673 Smith Street
Bandy Realty Co.
Restaurant

50,000.00

The declared estimated cost of construction of the buildings and structures listed on the previous pages is \$10,824,700.00 or 59% of the total estimated construction cost figures; while the number of permits issued for the construction of these buildings is only 138 or less than 12.6% of the total number of permits issued for the construction of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings during the fiscal year.

It is advisable to keep in mind, when using the declared estimated cost of construction figures in this report, that these figures are neither total nor accurate due to the usual reluctance on the part of some people to declare fair or true cost estimates, etc.

However, the margin of error does not seriously affect the comparisons and the conclusions drawn from these figures; - but the amount of money collected through fees based upon declared estimated costs of construction is considerably less than it should be.

Respectfully submitted,

John Pagliaro

Inspectional Activities Pertaining to
Safety Requirements in Buildings

The annual inspection of all licensed occupancies, such as theatres, hotels, assembly halls of all types, cafes, barrooms, restaurants, etc., were carried on in the usual manner by checking:

- (a) The general structural conditions of the building;
- (b) The type construction, protection and accessibility of exits, the swing of exit doors, exit signs and lights;
- (c) The type, condition and location of heating and cooking equipment, including their safety devices and controls;
- (d) The types, condition and location of fire protection equipment, such as automatic sprinkler system (wet and dry), fire extinguishers, fire hose and standpipe installations, fire alarm systems, etc.

The program of annual inspections, started many years ago and now considered routine, provides that type of inspectional service entirely devoted to the elimination or correction of hazardous conditions that come within the purview of the rules.

Annual inspections of all public and semi-public occupancies are made in order to maintain approved standards of safety. The License Bureau will not issue any license without first obtaining the approval of this office concerning the structural and fire safety conditions of the premises. This type of inspectional service places an unusual burden on the field inspectors during the months of October and November every year — two months to complete inspections and submit reports for processing before the approvals or denials can be reported to the License Bureau.

In cases of serious life hazard, revocation of license is employed in order to prevent possible disaster.

The processing of complaints is another important function requiring inspectional services. During the past year, more than 19,750 inspections were made through this medium, checking and investigating complaints of hazardous conditions existing in residential, commercial, industrial, storage, educational, religious, institutional and mixed occupancy buildings. This effort has been bolstered, over the years, by the participation and cooperation of the members of the Fire Prevention Bureau. As a result of this type of service, thousands of buildings of all type of construction and occupancies have been made safer or razed. Structural fire preventive and fire protective remedies applied as a result of this effort are as follows:

- (a) Repairs to and replacement of structural components of buildings;
- (b) General repairs to existing buildings for proper maintenance;
- (c) Installation of automatic sprinkler system;
- (d) Erection of fire division walls;
- (e) Erection of fire-resistive partitions;
- (f) Erection of fireproof or fire-resistive enclosures around stairways and vertical shafts of all types;
- (g) Construction of fire-resistive ceilings for horizontal protections;
- (h) Installation of opening protective on windows where exposure distances to lot lines and other buildings are below minimum requirements;

- (i) Erection of fire escapes;
- (j) Installation of fire alarm systems;
- (k) Installation of fire-hose and standpipe systems;
- (l) Installation of fire extinguishers;
- (m) Installation of fire dampers and automatic controls on ventilating and air-conditioning systems, etc.
- (n) Construction of fireproof vaults and enclosures for the storage of flammable liquids and volatiles and dangerous chemicals.

Steady pressure has been maintained behind the program of dilapidated dwellings and the elimination of fire hazard and unsanitary conditions. Because of the unprecedented number of unsafe, vacant, open and abandoned, and vandalized buildings, the Department devoted more time and effort in processing and demolishing vacant and dangerous structures. The Department of Building Inspection demolished one hundred forty-six (146) buildings. There was a total of 371 buildings demolished in the City.

DIVISION OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Mr. DiMase:

I respectfully submit the following report of the Division of Electrical Installations' activities during the fiscal year July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974, including a summary of its revenue, expenditures and operations.

SUMMARY

REVENUE: The Division of Electrical Installations received credit for fees collected by the Department of Building Inspection as follows:

There were Fifty (50) Limited Premises Permits issued and One Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Five (1,925) electrical permits for installation of electrical wiring and apparatus including alterations and repairs, for which a total fee of \$26,333.65 was collected.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTION DIVISION

From July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974

Number of rough wiring inspections	445
Number of defective installations re-inspected	486
Number of certificates of approval issued	1595
Number of inspections after fire	500
Number of investigations requested by the Narragansett Electric Company	775
Number of special investigations	6380
Minimum Housing Inspections	106
Limited Premises Inspections	50
Approved Fire Alarm Systems	25
Total number of Inspections	10362
Letters to Owners	1135
Number of disconnects ordered	89
Sign Locations cleared	142
Sign locations non illuminated cleared	69
Sign locations illuminated	73
Estimated value fee	\$3,110,158.00
Total number of permits issued	1925
Total fee	\$ 26,333.65

R E P O R T

The City has changed considerably over the past five years with the new high rise buildings, and our inspectors carried a much heavier workload although every effort is being made to keep this workload to a minimum.

Nevertheless, the Electrical Division will attempt to maintain its reputation for high safety standards and will perform the services expected to the limit of its capacity.

The Electrical Division has participated in the following Public Safety Programs:

1. State of Rhode Island Fire Safety Code for Fire Alarm and Emergency Exit Lighting.
2. State Seminar on Minimum Housing Codes.
3. The City of Providence Fire Department Training School.
4. The election of the Chief Inspector to the Executive Committee of the Eastern Section International Association of Electrical Inspectors.
5. Lecturing on the safe use of electricity at the State Vocational Facility in Providence, Lincoln and Smithfield, Rhode Island.
6. Member of the Underwriters Laboratories Steering Committee for the Study of Non-Metallic Plastic Conduit, boxes and fittings Representing the International Association of Electrical Inspectors.
7. Instructor at James J. Hanley Education Center, Electricity Adult Education.

Future Plans:

The future plans of the Electrical Division are:

To provide more frequent inspections of the progress on new construction work.

To provide inspections for Limited Premises more promptly than was possible in the past year.

To review the latest edition of the National Electrical Code for possible up-dating of its Rules & Regulations.

To provide better service to contractors, architects and engineers who are planning electrical installations for buildings and structures in the City of Providence.

Respectfully submitted,

Oliver O. Dore
Chief Electrical Inspector

DIVISION OF PLUMBING, DRAINAGE AND GAS PIPING

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Sir:

As requested, this will show the activities and statistical record of the Plumbing Division for the fiscal year July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974.

Plumbing Inspections	3656		
Drain Inspections	1079		
Miscellaneous Visits	163		
Minimum Housing Visits	<u>1287</u>		
		Total	6185
Plumbing Plans Filed	956		
Drain Plans Filed	<u>332</u>		
		Total	1288
Work On Old Buildings	795		
Work On New Buildings	<u>161</u>		
		Total	956
Sewer Connections	956		
Cesspool Connections	<u>0</u>		
		Total	956
Final Inspections	873		
Estimated Cost of Plumbing Plans		\$1,424,192.10	
Estimated Cost of Drain Plans		<u>167,675.00</u>	
	Total	\$1,591,867.10	
Fees for Limited Sprinkler License Issued		250.00	
Fees for Limited Drain Layer's License Issued		<u>350.00</u>	
	Total	\$600.00	
Fees for Plumbing & Drainage Permits and Limited Licenses	Total	\$17,366.94	

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph B. Dempsey, Chief
Plumbing, Drainage & Gas Piping

DIVISION OF MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Mr. DiMase:

This is the Annual Report of the Mechanical Division for
The year July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974.

In the past year a decrease in new mechanical installations was recorded due to the inflation that has gripped our country affecting all the building trades to a point where upon less installations were made and recorded within our City as well as other localities throughout the United States.

Within the City limits new high rise structures were constructed consisting of numerous homes for the elderly, office buildings, expansions of hospital facilities and residential structures.

Replacement of two new Inspectors was granted to the Division and in turn made the working conditions much lighter for the regular field inspectors and the back load of inspections that had previously built up were able to be worked on, resulting in lessening the workload that had been built up due to the shortage of personnel.

The Chief of the Division sat in on a meeting with a panel in regards to the Elevator Code pertaining to the State of Rhode Island and the City of Providence. Final results have not been computed as of this date.

At present the duties of the Chief Examiner have been taken over by the Chief of the Division, until such time when this matter can be resolved.

The Chief and staff of the Mechanical Division also gratefully acknowledge the splendid support and advice of Hon. Joseph A. Doorley, Mayor of Providence, and Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director of the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph F. Kane, Chief
Mechanical Equipment Division

There were 600 Permits issued for 1,023 units from
July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974:

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>UNITS</u>
Oil Burners	140
Gas Burners	99
Boilers	152
Gas Water Heaters	64
Oil Water Heaters	5
Furnaces	50
Ductwork	59
Air Conditioning	54
Radiation	63
Tanks	94
Ventilation	16
Sprinklers	30
Refrigeration	11
Elevators	24
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	12
Spray Booth	1
Generator	4
Unit Heaters	9
Miscellaneous	<u>136</u>
	1,023

There were 3,488 locations visited and 10,946 inspections and investigations made.

INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Complaints	31
Violations (Illegal & Incorrect installation of equipment)	103
Oil Burners	140
Gas Burners	99
Boilers	152
Gas Water Heaters	64
Oil Fired Water Heaters	5
Furnaces	50
Ductwork	59
Air Conditioners	54
Radiation	63
Tanks	94
Ventilation	16
Sprinklers	30
Refrigeration	11
Elevators	24
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	12
Spray Booths	1
Generators	4
Unit Heaters	9
Miscellaneous	136
Progress Inspections	7,943
Investigations	1,846
	<u>10,946</u>

In addition to the above mentioned inspections and investigations:

Elevator Tests	34
Sprinkler Tests	30
Generator Tests	3

The following is an accounting of the Division of Mechanical Equipment and Installations from July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974. The estimated valuation of such equipment is \$2,837,755.67 for which the following revenue in fee charges were collected:

REVENUE

Oil Burners	\$1,652.65	
Gas Burners	1,007.80	
Boilers	1,952.55	
Gas Water Heaters	434.65	
Oil Water Heaters	22.75	
Furnaces	839.55	
Ductwork	1,200.35	
Air Conditioners	2,109.15	
Radiation	395.15	
Tanks	768.10	
Ventilation	895.75	
Sprinklers	1,245.31	
Refrigeration	811.75	
Elevators	1,420.84	
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	133.75	
Spray Booths	8.25	
Generators	95.50	
Unit Heaters	65.50	
Miscellaneous	<u>4,384.67</u>	
	\$19,441.82	
		\$19,441.82
New Licenses:		
Boiler Operator	511.00	
Operating Engineer	350.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	49.00	
Apprentice Fireman	67.00	
License Renewals:		
Boiler Operator	2,120.00	
Operating Engineer	2,628.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	<u>104.00</u>	
	\$5,829.00	
		\$ 5,829.00
		<u>\$25,270.82</u>

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Administration Division provides direction and coordination over the business management functions of the Department of Building Inspection.

In order to establish uniformity in law enforcement and consistency in operating procedures, the Department has been organized under separate Divisions. Through the Division Chiefs, the activity of each of these Divisions is coordinated by the Director.

The Division performs administrative research and investigation, budgeting, personnel, records management and forms control, purchasing and supplies. This Division also researches, investigates, and prepares written administrative procedures and systems, furnishes recommendations and advice in its several areas to Department supervision and management. The Division's responsibilities include preparing payrolls, car allowances, purchase orders, inter-departmental orders, and other related documents.

The Division collects fees for various types of permits, licenses, Zoning, Building and Housing Board applications for exceptions and variances.

The Division collected \$156,650.25 in fees for the entire Department for the Fiscal Year July 2, 1973 to June 28, 1974.

The Director serves as the policy making and coordinating head of the Department to the end that the Department may function still more effectively through planning, direction and coordination.

REVENUE SUMMARY

To: Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director

Subject: Fees collected by all Divisions of the Department of Building Inspection in the City of Providence, Rhode Island, and the same deposited at the City Collectors' Office for the fiscal year starting July 2, 1973 and ending June 28, 1974.

Inclusive:

Total Collections and Deposit \$156,650.25

Total Collected by Inter-office Division:

Structures and Zoning Division	\$ 82,968.84
Electrical Installation	26,333.65
Mechanical Division	25,270.82
Plumbing and Drainage Division	17,366.94
Zoning Board	3,500.00
Building Board	1,175.00
Housing Board	35.00
Total	<u>\$156,650.25</u>

Respectfully submitted,

Marie D'Elena

DIVISION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

Housing Code enforcement involves considerably more than having inspectors go from door to door and handing out violation notices. It involves working with the people involved to explain the violations, to give them advice and assistance on how they can best be corrected.

The Housing Inspection Division is responsible for carrying out, area by area, the city-wide Housing Inspections necessary to comply with certain Federal Government requirements for recertification of the City's Workable Program for Community Improvement. The City of Providence, by having a Workable Program approved by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, is eligible for Federal monetary assistance for a wide range of programs, including Model Cities, Urban Renewal, Neighborhood Development, Interim Assistance, and Code Enforcement.

The Workable Program Recertification currently commits the City to a house by house reinspection.

During the year 1973-1974, the Division of Code Enforcement referred to the Department of Building Inspection 1,777 complaints which they uncovered during their survey. These complaints had to be verified by the four Divisions of the Department of Building Inspection before a violation notice was sent to the owner. Also, before the permit was issued for this work, zoning had to be checked to be sure that the premises were not in violation of the Zoning Ordinance. The Department of Building Inspection, because it has

qualified experts in Structures, Electrical, Mechanical, and Plumbing fields, inspected and supervised all the work until completed.

The intensive inspectional activities of the Department of Building Inspection is evidenced in the greatly improved appearance of the areas which have been inspected. The Inspectional Program is generally being carried out with the cooperation of property owners and is coming to be recognized by the public as being in their best interest in maintaining property values, as well as safe and healthful neighborhood conditions.

People really want stricter code enforcement was the surprising findings of a survey of ten cities made recently by the Survey Research Program of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Harvard University. So great is the concern for better housing inspection that the majority of people surveyed indicated that city government should spend more money for this service.

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

The Fire Prevention Bureau and the Department of Building Inspection frequently discuss plans on proposed new buildings and alterations so as to define and set standards, before the Department of Building Inspection issues a permit for the work.

Institutes and organizations now put greater stress on fire safety in planned structures. Every new proposed project includes a section "Fire Precautionary Measures", covering everything affecting the building's fire safety, e.g., the combustibility of the building materials, the fire resistance of the structure as a whole, the classification of machines according to potential fire hazard, outside and inside water requirements, the danger of explosion in various areas and outside installations of a plant, and protection of buildings and structures with stationary extinguishing units, automatic signaling, etc. Thus, it is easier for planners to arrive at the right degree of fire precaution in a given building.

Additional requirements for life-saving fire protection devices and systems in homes, apartments and high-rise buildings, will be included in the newly revised Minimum Property Standards being issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

According to the Department the new requirements are the results of many months of study by the HUD-FHA Office of Technical and Credit Standards. When in use they will offer vastly increased protection to occupants from deaths due to fires.

The purpose of the revisions will be to give early warning to occupants of the presence of fire, the confinement of fire, safe refuge areas, and early fire control through the use of sprinklers in selected areas, as well as furnish realistic, safe and economic fire protection.

The Fire Prevention Bureau investigates all fires of incendiary origin or of suspicious nature and all fires which cause injuries to persons. The Fire Marshal works closely with the Director of the Department of Building Inspection.

The Fire Prevention Bureau during its routine inspections uncover violations of the Building Code. These violations are referred to the Department of Building Inspection for investigation.

The Director directs the violation to one of the four Divisions; namely, Division of Structures and Zoning, Electrical, Mechanical, and Plumbing.

The proper Division makes:—

- (1) A re-inspection of premises;
- (2) Sends out letter to owner informing him of violation;
- (3) Issues a permit for the work;
- (4) Supervises work until violation is corrected.

If violation is not corrected within thirty (30) days from the date of notice, the Department of Building Inspection institutes legal action against the owner. Most cases involving code violations were resolved and cases dismissed by the time of the hearing.

We are waiting for the approval of the "Fire Prevention Code" by the City Council, which will aid the Fire Prevention Bureau to force compliance in serious cases through legal action.

The adoption of the Fire Prevention Code will produce good results if coupled with a sound enforcement program.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Historic District Commission under the leadership of Mrs. George E. Downing, has made considerable progress in preserving both the buildings and architectural value of buildings in the Historic District. More and more of Benefit Street and College Hill has been rescued from slum conditions or threatened demolition. This area has become one of the most beautiful and charming residential streets in the city.

The College Hill district contains more than 150 restored 18th and early 19th Century buildings, which according to the Interior Department were once the "wealthy nucleus of the city".

The landmarks, are "recognized to encourage preservation of historically significant properties". Owners receive plaques and certificates if they wish.

College Hill was chosen for its "largely undisturbed area of 18th and early 19th Century structures which, as a group, exemplify the urban New England setting of the period". The district is also the nucleus from which developed the City of Providence.

Since 1960 more than 150 buildings have been restored in the area.

The First Baptist Meeting House, and the Providence Athenaeum library have been especially cited as "noteworthy structures".

The Corliss-Carrington House on Williams Street was built in 1810-11, and the Department of the Interior describes it as a

"tall square mansion (which) well expressed the sophistication attained by some 19th Century urban New England residences".

The three and one-half story brick Ives House on Power Street was built in 1803-06. The department calls it a "magnificent Federal-style mansion".

The restoration of the 19th Century mansion known as Woods-Gerry House at 62 Prospect Street, by Rhode Island School of Design, has helped to keep Prospect Street "as one of our great streets".

Preservation of our common cultural heritage is a moral obligation which rests squarely on the shoulders of every citizen. Since World War II, a new generation of Americans has awakened to the importance of historic preservation and in doing so they are giving the movement strong impetus and broader scope. Once concerned primarily with saving and restoring notable individual buildings as historic house museums, the movement now seeks to perpetuate our much wider heritage of history and architecture as an irreplaceable part of the living fabric and beauty of our communities. Once supported chiefly by historians and antiquarians, the movement now extends into all walks of life and touches the work of planners, architects, public officials, realtors, landscape architects, bankers, and all the citizens. Modern preservation is, therefore, directed toward perpetuating architectural and aesthetic as well as historic and patriotic values; historic districts as well as individually notable buildings.

The Historic District Commission must verify all plans before the Department of Building Inspection can issue a permit for the work

The inspectional supervision pertaining to beauty and restoration is done by Mrs. Downing. The inspectional supervision pertaining to safety is done by the Department of Building Inspection

The Director of the Department of Building Inspection, as an ex-officio member of the Historic District Commission, sat during all their executive sessions when matters of importance concerning the Historic District were discussed.

REMOVAL OF JUNKED VEHICLES
FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY

The City is continuously combatting the nuisance of junk yards marring the landscape of our city. Science must and will find new ways to use the growing stockpiles of scrap metal building up in our auto graveyards. But, in the meantime, we must do what we can to ease the pain during this extensive period of convalescence. Continued pressure in the enforcement of the "Ordinance Providing for the Removal of Junked or Abandoned Vehicles from Private Property" resulted in removing junked cars from:—

- (1) Private Property
- (2) Housing projects
- (3) Churches
- (4) Schools
- (5) Redevelopment areas
- (6) State-owned property
- (7) Cars with Police Department courtesy notices

Upon notification of abandoned or stolen vehicles to be towed away, the Department must first tag the vehicles by placing a sticker on the car for a period of 7 days. This gives the owner ample time to claim the vehicle before it is removed. Many of the cars removed were rodent infested and with great difficulty the men had to be extremely careful in removing these vehicles.

Children are often attracted to these abandoned cars and very often are subject to injury caused by broken fragments and loose equipment.

We are grateful to the Police Department for removing junk cars from public and private property. The Department's effort has helped immensely to keep our city clean.

The problem of junked cars is by no means a local one. The President of the United States has recently shown his deep concern over this problem on a national basis. Steps have been taken by the Federal Government to combat the nuisance of junk yards marring the landscape on our principal roads throughout the nation.

THE DIRECTOR'S ACTIVITIES

The Director is responsible for the planning, direction, supervision and coordination of the activities and programs of the Department of Building Inspection, and performs the following functions, personally or by delegation:

1. Establishes general policies and procedures of conduct of the department.
2. Establishes performance standards for all personnel.
3. Establishes standards of deportment and conduct for all personnel.
4. Prepares annual budget.
5. Establishes level of public relations.
6. Makes final Departmental decisions on legal actions.
7. Makes final actions on code ammendments.
8. Makes final decisions on code interpretations.
9. Makes work assignments to supervisory and key personnel.
10. Develops formats for correspondence.
11. Makes contact with other Department Heads on matters of mutual concern or interest.
12. Establishes methods for the conduct of special projects.
13. Compiles and submits annual reports.
14. Reviews effectiveness of field inspection.
15. Keeps himself informed on all the latest engineering technology as it affects the Building Inspection Department.

16. Recommends code amendments and code changes.

17. The Director develops processes and procedures to insure the effective and convenient flow of work traffic pertaining to the office functions.

18. Issues Certificates of Occupancy.

The Director performs the Engineering Research for the Department. The primary objective is to review new materials, standards and techniques of the building industry to determine whether they meet the purpose and intent of the Providence Building Code and, if so, to make provision for their use.

The acceptance of new materials and methods of construction in the City of Providence is a cooperative function of professional and construction groups. The one all important question "Does this provide Code equivalency as to safeguarding life, limb, health, property and public welfare". Many new materials and construction approaches have been approved which include: sandwich panels for low-cost residential buildings; precast prestressed hollow core floor slabs; revised fire ratings for concrete block walls; anchorage systems for precast concrete, and computer designed diaphragms for wind loadings.

Technological advances have soared to heights undreamed of fifty years ago. But a technological advance that means new convenience, new comfort, new leisure — can also mean hazard to life and property. Such unforeseen dangers can be conquered, and they must.

The full sophistication of many new products far surpasses most users' understanding. At the same time, there is a growing public concern that people should be protected against potential hazards in the new products and new materials, by someone who understands their complexities. The Director has the responsibility in accepting new materials and equipment which conform to national standards. The local government has delegated the "police power" pertaining to building regulations to the Director because there are sufficient standards in the code to guide him in making decisions as to the conformity of proposed construction to the code.

Among other functions of the Director are:--to review requested variances and exceptions to the Building Code and the Zoning Ordinance, and make appropriate recommendations and send referrals of the proper sections of the Ordinances to the Secretary of the Zoning Board of Review, so that the Secretary can have the cases advertised in the newspaper for public hearing.

The continued public relations program has resulted in numerous other speaking engagements for the Director. The primary purpose of this speaking engagement program is to acquaint the public with the operations of the Department. Also community organizations such as "Block Groups" gain an opportunity to explain their views on some of the common problems governed by the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance.

On July 17, 1973, the Director lectured at R.I. Junior College on "Building Codes as an Aid in Fire Prevention and Fire Protection"; also on "Building Construction".

On August 22, 1973, the Director was elected Chairman of the Rhode Island State Building Code Standards Committee. The Director immediately set up the machinery for drafting a uniform state building code. The new code is to replace the various municipal codes in Rhode Island.

On September 20, 1973, by Resolution No. 473, the Providence City Council honored Mr. DiMase for having achieved an International, National, and Statewide reputation as one of the most competent men in his profession. The Resolution also recommended that because of Mr. DiMase's proven abilities, competence, and experience, the City Council wishes to bring him to the attention of His Honor the Mayor, not only for a salary scale commensurate with his unusual background, experience, and ability, but also in grateful acknowledgement for all his work and service above and beyond the call of duty. The City Council recommended that His Honor the Mayor consider any reasonable way to compensate Mr. DiMase accordingly.

On October 29, 1973, the Director lectured at R.I. Junior College in Warwick on "Building Codes as an Aid in Fire Prevention and Fire Protection"; also on "Building Construction".

On November 27-28, 1973, the Director attended the National Fire Protection Association committee meeting on "Systems Concepts for Fire Protection in Structures", in Washington, D.C.

On January 3-4-5-6, 1974, the Director attended the Mid-Year Meeting of BOCA International in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He participated in the proposed code changes and also participated on a panel-discussing problems and new programs of the large cities.

On January 7-8, 1974, the Director attended meetings with the Model Code Groups on "High-Rise Buildings", in Orlando, Florida.

On January 9, 1974, the Director inspected the Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

On January 10-11, 1974, the Director attended the National Fire Protection Association committee meeting on "Heights and Areas", in Orlando, Florida.

On January 24, 1974, the Director attended a meeting of the New England Building Code Association, Inc., at Logan Airport, to discuss new proposed "State Codes" for New England.

On February 20, 1974, the Director presented the "Engineer of the Year", at a testimonial of all the Engineering Societies at the Hearthstone Inn, in Massachusetts.

On February 28, and March 1, 1974, the Director attended the 25th Eastern States Building Inspectors School in New York City. The Director spoke on "Fire Safety in High-Rise Buildings".

On March 11, 1974, the Director lectured at R.I. Junior College in Warwick, on "Building Codes as an Aid in Fire Prevention and Fire Protection"; also on "Building Construction".

On March 12, 1974, the Director talked to the Mt. Pleasant Elementary School - parents organization.

On April 5, 1974, the Director lectured at the "Providence Firemen's Training School".

On April 25, 1974, the Director attended a meeting of the New England Building Code Association, Inc., at the Yankee Motor Inn, and spoke on "Fire Supression Systems" and "Energy Conservation".

On April 30, 1974, the Director presented Certificates of Certification to the R.I. Building Officials Association, at the Ramada Inn, in Seekonk, Massachusetts.

On April 29, and May 3, 1974, the Director lectured to the senior engineering class at Brown University on "Fire Protection through Modern Building Codes".

On May 24, 1974, the Director spoke and installed the new Officers and Directors of the Rhode Island Society of Professional Engineers, at the Holiday Inn, in Providence.

On May 28, 1974, the Director participated in the Academic Procession of Providence College.

On May 29, 1974, the Director spoke before the Rhode Island Chapter of the Construction Specification Institute and the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, on the proposed "R.I. State Building Code".

On June 3, 1974, the Director participated in the Academic Procession of Brown University.

On June 8-14, 1974, the Director attended the BOCA International 59th Annual Conference in Detroit, Michigan. The Director, as Past President of BOCA International, presided at numerous functions, and took part on all BOCA Code changes. The Director was on a panel which discussed the problem of "Fire Safety in High-Rise Buildings". There was considerable discussion of current problems and new programs of the large cities. Everyone profited by an exchange of information.

The continued public relations program resulted in numerous other speaking engagements for the Director. The primary purpose of this speaking engagement program is to acquaint the public with the operations of the Department. Also, community organizations gain an opportunity to explain their views on some of the common problems governed by the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance.

C O N C L U S I O N

High-Rise Buildings pose a major threat to the safety of the occupants from fire as well as an exceptional, and extremely difficult fire suppression problem. Today's new buildings are becoming ever larger in height and area, more complex in mechanical features, and the use of a new generation of building materials all create a problem.

Fires in high-rise buildings have forcefully pointed out that present building concepts, as demonstrated by many modern, well-built, code-conforming high-rise buildings, are not adequate.

The average citizen living in a modern country expects that a combination of design skills and scrutiny by public officials will ensure his safety - particularly in glistening new buildings. He expects to be protected from harm and to be able to go about his daily activities with confidence.

Sound judgment and leadership are demanded in examining the fire safety worth of alternatives.

The problem of high-rise buildings presented one more challenge to the Director. Therefore, the Director proposed an amendment to the Building Code to provide fire safety regulations for high-rise buildings. On June 19, 1974, the City Council approved the new regulations as submitted. The provisions of the new ordinance apply to all buildings of (1) Use Group E, Business Buildings; (2) Use Group L-1, Residential (hotel) Buildings; and (3) Use Group L-2, Residential (multi-family) Buildings that are more than six (6) stories or seventy-five (75) feet in height.

We hope that this ordinance will provide buildings where people can be confident of safety for themselves, their loved ones, their possessions, their investments, and their jobs.

The Department of Building Inspection continued to strive toward encouragement of better construction through greater service to the public and industry....by improving procedures, revising the codes, allowing new materials and new methods of construction so as to reduce construction costs.

We will continue to make substantial progress in these and other ways....all the while increasing our efforts to protect the safety of the public.

Enforcement of damaged and abandoned buildings that menace health and safety was given added impetus by the Director. The City demolished 146 buildings and placed a lien on the property, as prescribed by law. There were 225 buildings demolished by owners, making a total of 371 buildings demolished. The Director strove for enforcement rather than legal prosecution. However, when legal action became necessary as a last resort, success was attained in 100% of the cases.

While the use of the community's police power as a back-up for Zoning Ordinance and Building Code enforcement is essential code administration will not be successful if it is considered as a police action seeking to apprehend law breakers. It must, instead, stress the service it renders to the property owner, the tenant and the entire community. As part of this stress on service, the terms compliance or administration may be substituted for

enforcement, experts or specialists for inspectors and investigation report for violation notice.

The enforcement of the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance are necessary for the development of the community. Although all of these laws, ordinances and codes are necessary for the healthful development of the community, their effectiveness will be greatly diminished unless well qualified administration is provided. The administrative staff should be carefully selected and well organized to serve the public effectively and efficiently.

The Building Code and Zoning Ordinance affect the lives and activities of the citizens of our community more than any other ordinance or code. The proper enforcement is a most important and serious responsibility of the Director of the Department of Building Inspection.

Code implementation takes courage. It's not the easy way out--but, it's the right way. It's a job that has to be faced up to, and what's more, it's a local responsibility.

Code enforcement can be popular particularly when it is realized that these are the tools of government best suited to help the citizen. This course of preventive action is by far superior to the alternative of either taking no action at all, or waiting too late and being confronted with buildings in such poor conditions that nothing short of total clearance will be necessary.

The desire to retain and to strengthen good municipal government shared by the elected officials and by the residents they represent is reflected in our efforts to make the buildings

they live in...and work in...more meaningful and more enjoyable, and at the same time, to continuously improve our great City of Providence.

The Department is still having difficulty in obtaining new personnel, due to the fact that the compensation offered by the City of Providence is not enough to attract competent and qualified personnel. At present there are three vacancies in the Department, which includes the Chief of Structures and Zoning.

In spite of the shortage of personnel, the Department has rendered good service to the community. This was accomplished as a result of the employees working with dedication and purpose under a very heavy work schedule to serve all in the best manner possible.

The continued loyalty of the employees, and guidance and cooperation extended by His Honor the Mayor, have greatly assisted in the solution of many problems which arose during the year. For their assistance I express my deep appreciation.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent Di Mase
Vincent DiMase, P.E.

Director