

652

**SEVENTEENTH  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**1972 - 1973**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
BUILDING INSPECTION**

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



**IN CITY COUNCIL**

**DEC 20 1973**  
**READ:**

**WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.**

*Vincent Dimase*  
**CLERK**

CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION  
112 Union Street

S E V E N T E E N T H   A N N U A L   R E P O R T

1972 - 1973

VINCENT DiMASE, P.E.  
DIRECTOR

October 25, 1973

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

Gentlemen:

The Seventeenth Annual Report of operations, work carried on, and achievements of the Department of Building Inspection during the year 1972-1973 is hereby submitted as required by ordinance.

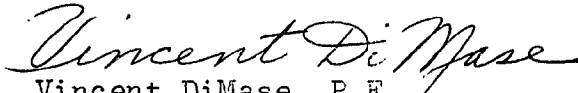
The details of the operations of the Department are covered in the following reports of each of the divisions.

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 \$35,076,319.93. The Department collected \$180,319.82 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, P.E.  
Director

## WHAT IS THE BUILDING CODE?

The "building code" has come to mean collectively all the local laws regulating the construction of a building, including all of its auxiliary components, such as electrical wiring, plumbing and mechanical. The building code governs not only the construction of a building but also its use and occupancy. The essential purpose of a code is to provide for the classification of a building's use, its type of construction, and to impose certain requirements as to its design and safety features, sufficient to reduce threats to life and property to an acceptable minimum.

Modern building codes place life safety above all other considerations and attempt to provide sufficient structural integrity, fire resistance, and existing systems to enable persons to utilize such building in relative safety, or enable them to vacate a distressed building.

The building code, as it pertains to dwellings, is ordinarily separate from a housing code. The distinction between the two is that a building code dictates the manner in which a building shall be constructed, and the housing code how it will be maintained.

The primary intent of building regulation is to provide reasonable controls for the construction, use and occupancy of buildings, and all of their various components. Thus such codes are minimum in nature, and under the provisions of the Police Power cannot be made to require construction of a quality excessive of that which is necessary to furnish a reasonable degree of safety. Attempts to impose construction requirements that might exceed

## 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 dangers 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.

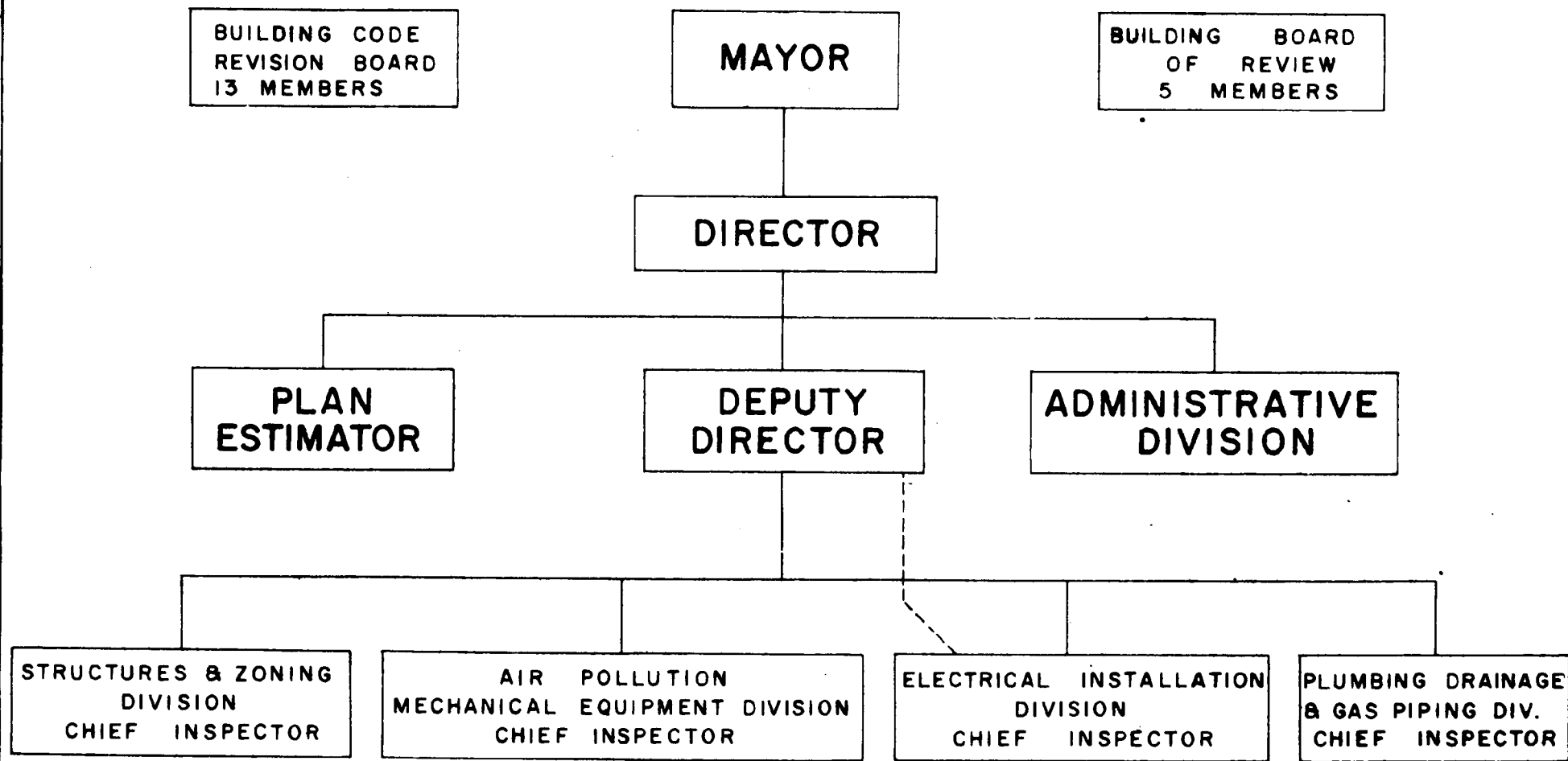
The duties of the Building Official are to organize, plan, coordinate, train, direct, control, review, and to represent his municipality as its expert in the field of code administration and enforcement. He is responsible for its smooth and proper performance and, likewise, accountable for all its actions - 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, 1972 to June 30, 1973.

Attached hereto are two tables setting forth by types of occupancies, the number of buildings 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 1973**  
**NEW**

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
Jan. 73	168100	6500				15000										249600
Feb. 73	24000		2561350												4000	2589350
Mar. 73	178000	40000						16000		7200					3600	284800
Apr. 73	274000	92600	475000	550000				1135000	16300							2542100
May 73	173500	20000		100000	844000	200000				5400	412500		25000			1780400
June 73	193000	173000				3000					25000		110000			504000
July 72	112500		63000			130000							16000		1500	323000
Aug. 72	310600	18500	1785000	407000											300000	2821100
Sept. 72	341000					17000				11450	50000		80000			499450
Oct. 72	243000	78000	1550000					905400		6100	65000					2847500
Nov. 72	394500	108000	1261400					750000			46000		558200			3118100
Dec. 72	20000	21000	1971000						70500		75000					2157500
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2432200</b>	<b>617600</b>	<b>9706250</b>	<b>1057000</b>	<b>844000</b>	<b>365000</b>		<b>2806400</b>	<b>86800</b>	<b>30150</b>	<b>673500</b>		<b>789200</b>		<b>309100</b>	<b>19717700</b>
				Permits			NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS									
Jan. 73	8		2			1							1		1	13
Feb. 73	24	1	2	2											2	31
Mar. 73	26					1				5	1		2			35
Apr. 73	17	3	2					3		3	1					29
May 73	27	7	5					1			2		6			48
June 73	1	1	1						2		1					6
July 72	13	3				1										17
Aug. 72	2		1												1	4
Sept. 72	11	2	2					1		3					1	20
Oct. 72	16	5	3	1				2	1							28
Nov. 72	13	1	0	1	1	3				2	4		1			25
Dec. 72	14	10									1		1			28
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>284</b>

# ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDING OPERATIONS BY MONTHS 19

73

## 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
Jan. 73	6200	19400	12500			429300		1000	500		11300		210800		1000	692000
Feb. 73	19400	10350	23300			45000		200			34500		14800		5500	153050
Mar. 73	25600	62400	16700		1200	72200			3200		20400		1600		2500	205800
Apr. 73	88100	26700	37200			107000		16100	1000	4200	7900		43500		6200	337900
May 73	58400	29300	32700			77400				1000	172000	15000	60700		6200	452700
June 73	40000	46300	30400	800	4500	60500		61500		1200	50200		55000		9100	359500
July 72	34950	9050	10350	650		9000		5000		400	56300	20800	70500			217000
Aug. 72	13100	11550	21750			316500		91900	400	800	179000	1800	43400		1900	686100
Sept. 72	62400	10200	9400	25000		62000		128300	2500		8100	20000	17900			345800
Oct. 72	14800	27350	80500	11500		7900		53000	1000	200	25950	4400	107100		5600	339300
Nov. 72	29150	31000	913500			63000			10000	2000	11700	200	4750		600	1065900
Dec. 72	33550	35300	376000			8500			5600	800	1000		93950		300	554550
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>425650</b>	<b>318900</b>	<b>1564300</b>	<b>37950</b>	<b>5700</b>	<b>1258300</b>		<b>357000</b>	<b>24200</b>	<b>10600</b>	<b>578350</b>	<b>62200</b>	<b>723550</b>		<b>38900</b>	<b>5105600</b>

## NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS

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
Jan. 73	4	7	8			7		1	1		6		4		1	39
Feb. 73	7	7	10			1		1			9		3		1	39
Mar. 73	16	24	11		1	8			2		10		1		1	74
Apr. 73	38	15	21			1		3	1	3	10		3		4	99
May 73	26	15	12			5				1	12	1	6		7	85
June 73	26	26	19	1	2	5		4		1	11		6		5	106
July 72	13	7	12	1		1		1		2	5	2	3			47
Aug. 72	11	7	14			4		6	1	1	9	1	5		3	62
Sept. 72	21	9	9	1		3		3	3		5	6	2			62
Oct. 72	13	13	8	2		2		2	1	1	5	4	8		3	62
Nov. 72	13	10	12			6			1	1	6	1	3		2	55
Dec. 72	10	8	14			2			5	1	1		2		1	44
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>		<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>46</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>774</b>

From the tables, the estimated cost of construction for the fiscal year from July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973, is as follows:

New Buildings	Permits 284
Estimated Cost	\$19,717,700.00
Additions & Alterations	Permits 774
Estimated Cost	\$5,405,600.00
Total Estimated Cost of Construction	\$25,123,300.00

Permits (not included in tables) issued during the period from July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973 are as follows:

Razing of Dilapidated Buildings	Permits 408
Sandblasting of Buildings	Permits 4
Moving of Buildings	Permits 3
Erection of Billboards	Permits 15
Erection of Wall Signs	Permits 35
Erection of Signs Over Sidewalks	Permits 94
Erection of Fire Escapes	Permits 24
Construction of Vaults	Permits 2
Storage of Dangerous Chemicals	Permits 9
Storage of Petroleum Products in Bulk	Permits 1
Total	595

(Total Permits Issued During the Fiscal Year were 1653)

Total number of buildings demolished in the City was 408, a total of approximately 843 dwelling units.

During the fiscal year, 1361 family units were added as a result of private buildings activities.

The additional units are grouped as follows:

(a) New Buildings	
One Family	172 Family Units
Two Family	33 Family Units
Multiple Family	1122 Family Units
(b) Conversions	34 Family Units

Total 1361

The total fees collected during the year July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973, amounted to \$94,040.43. During the fiscal year this Department processed 1855 building and zoning violations, including South Providence and East Side Renewal Project Areas. The Field Inspection Section of the Division conducted 18,590 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 \$50,000.00 or more:

670 North Main St. Charlesgate Sq. Partnership Housing for Elderly (200 Units)	\$2,561,355
Edward Realty Co. 1-7 Valley St. Housing for Elderly (154 Units)	1,971,000
The Charles Land Co. 460 Charles St. New 200 Apts. for Elderly	1,750,000
Regency Joint Venture 250 Fountain St. New Apts. & Offices (132 Units)	1,100,000
Huxley Avenue Providence College Ice Skating Rink	1,063,150
530-558 Wickenden St. Providence Boys Club Boys Club	844,000
Brown University 235 Hope St. Natatorium Bldg.	750,000
144 Pitman St. Wayland Nursing Home Nursing Home (140 Beds)	550,000
U.S. Investment & Development Corp. 160 Benedict St. Housing for Elderly (106 Units)	450,000
Providence Gas Co. 642 Allens Ave. Control Center & Offices	403,200
Providence Housing Authority 666-668 Prairie Ave. 21 Apts.	402,000

Providence Housing Authority 670-672 Prairie Ave. 21 Apts.	\$402,000
Rhode Island Hospital 593 Eddy St. New Radiation Bldg.	359,000
1890 House Assoc. 54 Jackson St. Housing for Elderly	351,000
Plantations Town House So. Main St. (Bldg.1,2,3,4,5,B) 20 Apts.	331,950
Plantations Town House So. Main St. (Bldg.6,7,8,9,10,A) 20 Apts.	331,950
9-11 Alumni Ave. Hope Development Apts. (41 Units)	325,000
Brown University 10 Young Orchard Ave.	301,800
6 Young Orchard Ave.	301,800
2 Young Orchard Ave.	301,800
3 New Dormitories for 56 Students Each	
125 DuPont Drive Industrial National Bank Bank & Offices	300,000
Plantations Town House So. Main St. (Bldg.12,13,14,15,B) 16 Apts.	265,550
Plantations Town House So. Main St. Bldg. 16 Apts.	265,550
Turks Head Corp. 76 Westminster St. Replace Windows	225,000
Swan Pt. Cemetery Blackstone Blvd.	215,000

752-777 No. Main St. Wholesale Center of No. Main St., Inc. Stores	\$200,000
100 Willard Ave. Kathryn Realty Inc. Offices & Warehouses	200,000
P.S.I. 169 Governor St. New Office Bldg.	130,000
77 Reservoir Ave. Elliott Buick Inc. Auto Showroom	130,000
31-33 Nellie St. Jamco Corp. Apts. (20 Units)	120,000
75 Fountain St. Providence Journal Newspaper Office & Printing	112,000
Sulzberger Rolfe Inc. 263 South Main St. Alterations - Stores	107,000
76 Westminster St. Turks Head Corp. Stores & Offices	107,000
Sulzberger Rolfe Inc. 245 South Main St. Alterations - Stores	105,000
Sulzberger Rolfe Inc. 283 South Main St. Alterations - Stores	102,000
R.I. School of Design 1 Canal St. Interior Alterations; Auditorium and Classrooms	100,300
40 Candace St. Providence Health Centers, Inc. Medical Centers	100,000

14 Durfee St. Providence Health Centers, Inc. Medical Center	\$100,000
225 Elmwood Ave. Royal Crest Rest Center Rest Home (80 Beds)	100,000
76-90 Westminster St. Columbus National Bank Store & Offices	90,000
Rau Fastener 103 Westfield St. Mfg. & Warehouse	89,500
Swan Pt. Cemetery 585 Blackstone Blvd. New Mausoleum	85,000
CURE 229 Camp St. 15 Apts.	85,000
Dr. Joseph DeLuca 111 Plain St. Alteration - Offices	80,000
DiVozzi Bakery 1035-1039 Branch Ave. Bakery	75,000
Eastern Color & Chemical Co. 35 Livingston St. Addition, Office & Warehouse	75,000
35 Bissell St. Italo Marandola Apts. (10 Units)	72,000
Grecco Bros., Inc. 20 Katherine St. New Mfg. Bldg.	70,000
Plantations Town House So. Main St. Bldg. 11A Apts. (4)	66,390



Maxwell Waldman 250 Silver Spring St. New Restaurant	\$65,000
R.H.S. Realty 24 Livingston St. New Licht Mfg. Bldg.	65,000
Martha Michelovitch 85 Aldrich St. Storage & Light Mfg. & Office	63,000
1224-1226 No. Main St. LaFayette Radio & Electronic Corp.	60,000
First Hartford Realty Corp. 40 Westminster St. Interior Alterations	60,000
700 North Main St. Richmond Realty Auto Body Repair Shop	60,000
Brown University 128 Hope St. Anthropology Dept.	57,600
Foremost Lithograph 245 Dupont Dr. Addition to Mfg. Bldg.	53,000
Audionics Inc. 790 North Main St. New Store	50,000

The declared estimated cost of construction of the buildings and structures listed on the previous pages is \$19,206,895 - or 76.5% of the total estimated construction cost figures; while the number of permits issued for the construction of these buildings is only 59, or less than 5.6% 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 protective 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 18,590 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 system;
- (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, 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 sixty (60) buildings. There were a total of 408 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, 1972 to June 30, 1973, 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-one (51) Limited Premises Permits issued and two thousand one hundred twenty-five (2,125) electrical permits for installation of electrical wiring and apparatus including alterations and repairs, for which a total fee of \$28,666.76 was collected.

Electrical Inspection Division

From July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973

Number of rough wiring inspections	395
Number of defective installations re-inspected	769
Number of certificates of approval issued	2554
Number of inspections after fire	389
Number of investigations requested by the Narragansett Electric Company	867
Number of special investigations	4585
Minimum Housing Inspections	170
Limited Premises Inspections	51
Approved Fire Alarm Systems	24
Total Number of Inspections	9804
Letters to Owners	1175
Number of disconnects ordered	106
Sign locations cleared	165
Sign locations non illuminated cleared	70
Sign locations illuminated	95
Estimated value fee	\$2,696,200.00
Total number of permits issued	2125
Total fee	\$28,666.76

## Report

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 and 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, 1972 to June 30, 1973.

Plumbing Inspections	4134		
Drain Inspections	1013		
Miscellaneous Visits	172		
Minimum Housing Visits	<u>1363</u>		
		Total	6,682
Plumbing Plans Filed	1222		
Drain Plans Filed	<u>438</u>		
		Total	1,660
Work on Old Buildings	1334		
Work on New Buildings	<u>237</u>		
		Total	1,571
Sewer Connections	1222		
Cesspool Connections	<u>0</u>		
		Total	1,222
Final Inspections	1019		
Estimated Cost of Plumbing Plans			\$2,111,456.00
Estimated Cost of Drain Plans			<u>173,010.00</u>
		Total	\$2,284,466.00
Fees for Limited Sprinkler License Issued			100.00
Fees for Limited Drain Layer's License Issued			<u>350.00</u>
		Total	450.00
Fees for Plumbing & Drainage Permits and Limited Licenses			\$21,480.36

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph B. Dempsey, Chief Inspector  
Plumbing, Drainage and Gas Piping

DIVISION OF MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director  
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Mr. DiMase:

The following is the Annual Report which covers the activities and performance of the various operations of the Division of Mechanical Equipment and Installations, for the fiscal year July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973. Also included is a summary of all revenue received during the past fiscal year.

The workload was extremely heavy for the past year, due to the vacancy of an Inspector II, of which at this present date the replacement has not been made. I recommend that the vacant position be filled at the earliest convenience to overcome the problem that now exists.

Following is an accounting of all installations, revenue received, valuations of such equipment and fees collected for new and renewals on licenses for Boiler Operators, Operating Engineer and Refrigeration Machine Operators.

I wish to thank Mr. DiMase for the advice and support that was given throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph F. Kane, Chief Inspector  
Mechanical Equipment  
and Installations

There were 1,192 permits issued for 1,818 units from  
July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973:

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>UNITS</u>
Oil Burners	142
Gas Burners	142
Boilers	218
Gas Water Heaters	716
Oil Fired Water Heaters	13
Furnaces	71
Ductwork	82
Air Conditioners	32
Radiation	97
Tank	85
Ventilation	8
Sprinklers	18
Refrigeration	2
Elevator	32
Console Heaters	7
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	12
Spray Booths	1
Generators	5
Unit Heaters	9
Miscellaneous	126
	<u>1,818</u>

There were 4,229 locations visited and 12,041 inspections and investigations made.

Inspections and Investigations

Complaints	27
Violations (Illegal & Incorrect installations of equipment)	94
Oil Burners	142
Gas Burners	142
Boilers	218
Gas Water Heaters	716
Oil Fired Water Heaters	13
Furnaces	71
Ductwork	82
Air Conditioners	32
Radiation	97
Tanks	85
Ventilation	8
Sprinklers	18
Refrigeration	2
Elevators	32
Console Heaters	7
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	12
Spray Booths	1
Generators	5
Unit Heaters	9
Miscellaneous	126
Progress Inspections	8,490
Investigations	<u>1,612</u>
	12,041

In addition to the above-mentioned inspections and investigations:

Elevator Tests	39
Sprinkler Tests	18
Generator Tests	8

The following is an accounting of the Division of Mechanical Equipment and Installations from July 1, 1972 to June 30, 1973. The estimated valuation of such equipment is \$4,971,353.93 for which the following revenue in fee charges were collected:

REVENUE

Oil Burners	1,228.65	
Gas Burners	1,038.95	
Boilers	3,118.71	
Gas Water Heaters	4,172.25	
Oil Fired Water Heaters	247.00	
Furnaces	726.15	
Ductwork	2,024.35	
Air Conditioners	1,439.70	
Radiation	643.45	
Tanks	602.55	
Ventilation	988.10	
Sprinklers	756.14	
Refrigeration	10.75	
Elevators	2,420.07	
Console Heaters	51.50	
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	223.25	
Spray Booths	6.50	
Generators	141.50	
Unit Heaters	72.00	
Miscellaneous	6,162.70	
	<u>\$26,074.27</u>	
		\$26,074.27
New Licenses:		
Boiler Operator	504.00	
Operating Engineer	231.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	21.00	
Apprentice Fireman	81.00	
License Renewals:		
Boiler Operator	2,224.00	
Operating Engineer	2,684.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	108.00	
	<u>\$5,853.00</u>	
		<u>5,853.00</u>
		\$31,927.27

## 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 \$180,319.82 in fees for the entire Department for the Fiscal Year July 3, 1972 to June 29, 1973.

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 in the City Collector's Office for the fiscal year starting July 3, 1972, and ending June 29, 1973, inclusive.

Total Collections and Deposits \$180,319.82

Total Collected by Inter-Office Divisions:

Structures and Zoning	94,040.43
Electrical	28,666.76
Mechanical	31,927.27
Plumbing and Drainage	21,480.36
Zoning Board	3,290.00
Building Board	900.00
Housing Board	15.00
	<hr/>
	\$180,319.82

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 1972-1973, the Division of Code Enforcement referred to the Department of Building Inspection 1,307 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 their 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.

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 amendments.
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 is "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 supasses 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 were:—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 could have the cases advertised in the newspaper for public hearing.

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 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 August 3,4,5, 1972, the Director attended a meeting of the Model Code Group in Chicago. Building Code history was made here

when the full governing bodies of the Building Officials and Code Administrators International; International Conference of Building Officials; and the Southern Building Code Congress met and established the "Council of American Building Officials", known as CABO.

For the first time, the building code officials of the United States will be able to speak through one voice on matters of national importance.

It is gratifying that the Director, as President of BOCA International, was responsible in bringing the Model Code Groups together to form CABO.

On October 24, 1972, 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 January 2-3, 1973, the Director attended the Mid-Year Meeting of BOCA International in St. Petersburg, Florida. He participated in the proposed code changes and also participated on a panel - discussing current problems and new programs of the large cities.

On January 25, 1973, the Director attended a meeting of the New England Building Code Association, Inc. in Auburn, Mass., to discuss new proposed "States Codes" for New England.

On February 21, 1973, the Director presented the "Engineer of the Year", at a testimonial of all the Engineering Societies at the Hearthstone Inn, in Massachusetts.

On March 1-2, 1973, attended the Eastern States Building Inspectors School in New York City. The Director, spoke on the "BOCA Basic Code".

On March 19, 1973, the Director lectures at the R.I. Junior College in Warwick, R.I.

On March 21, 1973, the Director spoke before the "Adjusters Association of R.I.", on "The Building Inspection Department," duties, and the law on "Vacant Buildings".

On March 26,27, 1973, the Director was invited by the Armstrong Cork Co., to attend a Symposium: "Products of Combustion of (Plastics) Building Materials", at the Reserarch and Development Center - Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The Director, spoke on "Products of Combustion of Building Materials".

On April 4, 1973, the Director spoke before the "Property Owners Association of R.I.", on the "Building Code" and the law on "Vacant Structures".

On May 17, 1973, went to Nashua, New Hampshire, to inspect the "Continental Modular Homes", so as to approve them for our city.

On June 16-22, 1973, the Director attended the BOCA International 58th Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Director presided at numerous functions, and took part on all BOCA Code changes. 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

Fire research has been going on for a very long time. The concern for the safety of people who gather in large numbers where they live, work and play has given impetus to fire research. Coordination of effort and need between the researcher and the building code official is often poor. And complicating the problem is the variety of man-made materials which are now used in construction.

To confront the fire-research problem directly, and to set a course for future research, the Armstrong Cork Company held a Symposium on Products of Combustion of (Plastics) Building Materials in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on March 25-26, 1973. Assembled at the Symposium were more than 80 researchers and building code officials. The Director of the Providence Department of Building Inspection was one of three (3) Building Officials in the entire country to be present.

This Symposium contained several unique elements. Certainly the subject of the Symposium, Products of Combustion, i.e. smoke and toxic gases, was new and an immediate area of interest. It added a new dimension of information on fire, in addition to flammability. The idea of having both researchers and building code officials at the same meeting as speakers, and also participants, was the first in the United States. The experience was exhilarating. As simple a matter as language became important in the communication between these individuals. More was accomplished as the knowledge

and experience of each type of individual were used to obtain a clearer definition of what is needed and what can be done.

The Symposium was a success in creating new directions for research and in obtaining a more united effort in this field than we have had in the past.

The year of 1972-1973 was another year of growth and progress for Providence with an estimated valuation of \$35,076,319.93, one of the largest in history. There are certain highlights of the year's events that deserve special emphasis.

Foremost has been progress in apartment buildings, office buildings, industrial buildings, and hospitals.

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 60 buildings and placed a lien on the property as prescribed by law. There were 348 buildings demolished by owners, making a total of 408 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.

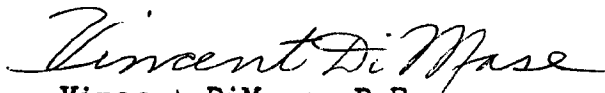
The desire to retain and to strengthen good municipal government shared by the elected officials and by the residents they represent is reflected in our efforts to make the buildings they live in...and work in...more meaningful and more enjoyable, and at the same time, to continuously improve our great 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 several vacancies in the Department; which includes Chief of Structures and Zoning, Plan Estimator and Building Inspector III.

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 DiMase, P.E.  
Director