THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

1958 1959

CITY OF PROVIDENCE

DEPARTMENT OF
BUILDING INSPECTION

VINCENT DiMASE
DIRECTOR

January 18, 1960

The Honorable Walter H. Reynolds, Mayor
and The Honorable City Council of the
City of Providence
City Hall
Providence, Rhode Island

Honorable Sirs:

I am pleased to submit the Third Annual Report of the Department of Building Inspection. The report covers the work performed by the various Divisions of the Department for the calendar year of 1959.

The Department of Building Inspection probably has a more direct impact on the everyday living of Providence than any other City agency. Our primary job, of course, is to enforce the codes we administer. In addition, I consider it highly important to foster public goodwill and cooperation in the process of enforcement.

In its third year of existence, our Department made major strides toward both those ends. We stepped up enforcement to a record level.

Our accomplishments, such as they may be, are due in large measure to the support of His Honor the Mayor, members of the Honorable City Council, the City Solicitor, the Fire Prevention Bureau, the Police Department, and other City Officials. That support I appreciate, and I look forward to their continued interest and guidance.

Respectfully submitted,

VINCENT DiMASE,
Director

IN CITY COUNCIL
FEB 4 1960
READ:
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT THE SAME BE RECEIVED.
Everett Whelan
CLERK

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

The Department, organized in 1957, and now in existence almost three years, administers the Building Code, Zoning Ordinance and various other laws, for the purpose of promoting public safety, and stemming blight in residential and business areas.

In the course of its operations, the Department makes many thousands of inspections annually, to ascertain violations of the various codes, and to form the basis of notices requiring compliance.

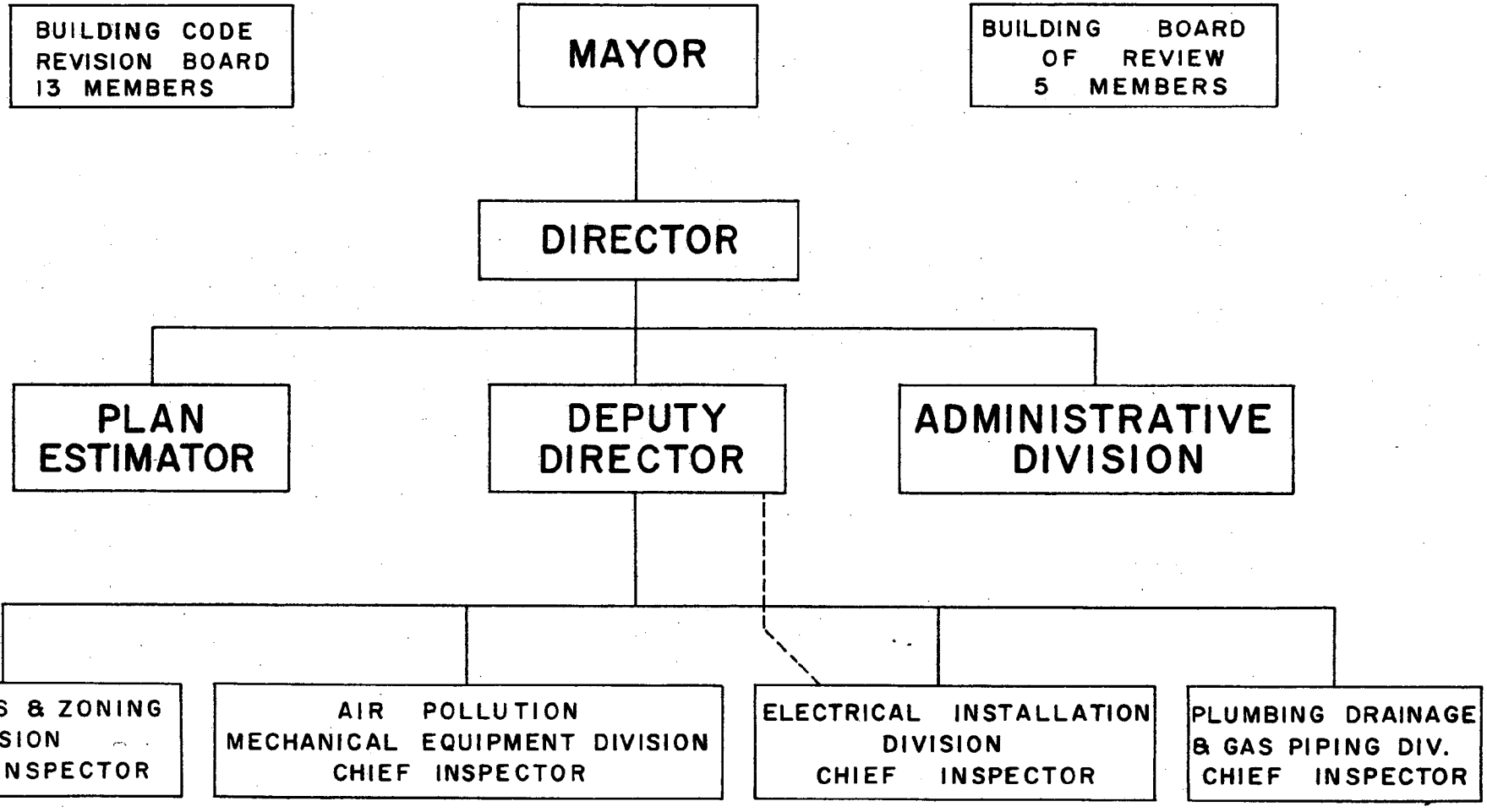
PRINCIPAL PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

Heading the Department is the Director, who has overall charge of its operations. Four major divisions, each headed by a Chief Inspector, carry out the principal duties of the Department.

Further details of the functions of the various divisions will appear in appropriate parts of this report.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

ORGANIZATION CHART



RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

Two Objectives: Enforcement of the Building Code, Zoning Ordinance and other codes affecting the properties and lives of citizens is a huge task. Getting people to accept the mandates of the codes willingly and to obey them voluntarily is a still greater undertaking. In 1959, the Department believes, it chalked up notable gains toward both those objectives.

Record Performance: Last year the Department made more inspections of dwellings and other buildings than ever before in its third year of history.

MINIMUM HOUSING DIVISION

The Division of Minimum Housing Standards in their course of housing code inspections uncovered violations of the Building Code. More than four (4,000) thousand complaints were referred to the Department of Building Inspection.

Our inspectors had to verify these complaints referred to us by the Division of Minimum Housing Standards by making an inspection of the premises and discussing the "why" and "how" of the inspections with the property owners, to explain the value of the inspections in upholding public safety, health and property values. Through a concerted drive voluntary compliance of violations was obtained on more than two (2,000) thousand complaints.

The Department of Building Inspection must not only follow up all complaints referred to us by the Division of Minimum Housing, but must issue permits for all work to be corrected and also inspect all work until completed. Final approval rests with the Department of Building Inspection.

This voluntary cooperation built up public understanding and goodwill.

The Department's success in accomplishing this work is in a large measure due to the fine spirit and performance of the employees. To all the employees I extend my hearty appreciation for their loyal and faithful service.

Progress has been a little slow in our Department because we had to take on this additional burden from the Division of Minimum Housing without any additional personnel. However, since the Honorable Council has approved the creation of six new jobs in our Department, I feel confident that greater progress will be achieved in 1960.

Statistical details of the year's accomplishments will appear in the subsequent parts of this report.

DIVISION OF STRUCTURES AND ZONING

This Division safeguards the public by upholding standards of construction and alteration, assuring protection against structural hazards, causing demolition of dangerous structures, and controlling uses through application of zoning restrictions.

This year was not without unusual problems--cornices on old existing buildings, marquees, change in occupancies involving large areas of defunct mills and factories. Conferences were held with representatives of various large engineering and architectural firms on the provisions in the 1956 American Concrete Institute code on flat slabs and ultimate design. Plastic design in steel will require some study by the Division.

ZONING INFORMATION

The Structural Division also performs the main function of answering questions of the public pertaining to the Zoning Ordinance. By the very nature of the performance of this responsibility, this Division plays an important part in the operation of the Department of Building Inspection. In fact, it can be said that the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance is the Department's "right arm" in protecting real estate from deterioration caused by flagrant misuse of adjacent land, and in assuring the people of Providence their rights to sunlight and air.

DIVISION OF STRUCTURES AND ZONING

The activities of the Division can be briefly summed up as follows:

(a) Plan Examination.

(b) Material Approvals.

(c) Field Inspections of Dangerous Structures.

(d) Routine Inspections of alterations and new buildings.

(e) Conferences with Engineers, Contractors and Material Men.

(f) Enforcement of the Building Code and the Zoning Ordinance.

Every plan of a building or structure for which a permit is necessary must be processed by this Division. During the past year this Division checked approximately 2660 plans of buildings and structures. It also checks plans for signs and billboards.

Other matters of importance handled by this Division are field inspections of dangerous structures, the witnessing of piling tests, tests of open web joists, prestressed concrete girders, and other miscellaneous tests. Floor loading in old buildings for which there are no plans available present unusual problems.

INSPECTIONAL ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO SAFETY REQUIREMENTS IN BUILDINGS

The annual inspections 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 type, 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.

This 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.

On December 1, 1958, the disastrous fire at Our Lady of the Angels School in Chicago caused us to re-evaluate the safety requirements of the Building Code for both new and existing schools. We also stepped up the enforcement of Chapter 1201 - "An Ordinance Relating to the Requirements for Existing Buildings Being Used for the Boarding, Lodging or Nursing Care of Convalescents and Others".

The processing of complaints is another important function requiring inspectional services. During the past year, almost 15,000 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 systems;

(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 protection;

(h) Installation of opening protectives 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. Consistent progress has been made in the program of removing buildings in dangerous condition.

COMMENTS ON 1959 BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Project Turnkey (New Post Office) is the world's first fully-mechanized post office, which is now being built in the West River Industrial Development. It is ideally situated for air, rail and motor transport.

Fully as modern as the mechanical and electronic equipment it houses, this spectacular building with the intersecting thin shell barrel roof, the large expanses of glass, and the clean lines of columns expresses function as well as beauty. The inside dimensions of the building are 420 feet x 300 feet. Minimum headroom under tie beams is 26 feet. Maximum headroom at center of each shell is 56 feet. Mezzanine provides 16,800 square feet of general office area on the second floor and 16,800 square feet on the work floor, leaving a total work floor area of 109,200 square feet.

The function of this building is to enclose an experimental mail handling facility. It is experimental in that the equipment and its arrangement is a prototype of much that is to come. By rearrangement of machines, conveyors and controls, and by addition or substitution of future systems the constant improvement of facilities can be developed. To permit this development with maximum flexibility, it was required that the building have a minimum number of interior supports and a clear height of from twenty-six feet to fifty-five feet. The challenge of these requirements were met by the architects and engineers

in a structure that combines modern design concepts with materials only recently available.

Some idea of the size of the building can be obtained by thinking of the roof area as being approximately equivalent to three football fields. This entire area is supported by ten columns on the exterior walls and two interior columns. Each of the interior columns are designed to support (1820) one thousand eight hundred and twenty tons. The seventy foot Cobi piles that support this load are sixty-four in number, each capable of withstanding seventy tons.

The roof as conceived consists of two longitudinal barrels intersected by three transverse barrels. Thus is formed six units of intersecting barrels each one hundred forty feet by one hundred fifty feet. Each unit is segregated from adjoining units by the introduction of a two inch void for expansion and contraction. This void serves another very useful purpose in that it permits each unit to act structurally independent of its neighbors. This separation of elements simplified the design and construction problems of a structure that is extremely complex at best.

The shell roof is of light weight concrete six inches thick over most of its area. There are stiffening ribs adjacent to the free edges and diagonally on the lines of intersection of the barrels. At the corners the shell rests on columns twenty-six feet high. The columns are

made up of two inch thick steel plate and have full moment connections at their bases. All shop fabrication of steel is by welding.

An unusual feature of this building is the use of adjustable ties at the edges of the shell to resist the horizontal thrust. Each tie must resist a force of eight hundred twenty thousand pounds. This force is so great that enormous moments would have been developed had the ties been placed at the tops of the columns. To overcome this problem the line of thrust from the shell was determined as precisely as possible and the ties placed on the intersection of this thrust line with the vertical thrust line of the columns. The result of this procedure, is that the roof is structurally a tied shell on elastic supports provided by the columns. A measure of the success of the engineers in locating the thrust line of the shell is that in tensioning the ties from zero to full load the maximum rotation of any shell over the columns was slightly more than six minutes.

Brown University is moving at a rapid pace with the new Computing Center and the new Pembroke Dormitory.

The Lift-Slab method of construction is being utilized to build the new Dormitory. Basically, the lift-slab method consists of pouring the upper floors of a structure on the ground level in their relative positions in the building, and then mechanically lifting them by the use of hydraulic jacks temporarily mounted on the tops of columns. These are

controlled from a centrally-located control board and powered by an electric pump. When each slab has been lifted to its proper elevation, it is permanently secured by welding steel plates to each column beneath the slab. The jacks are then removed. Through the use of the lift-slab method the architect is allowed great freedom for his planning. For example, with flat slab construction, the need for a sprandel beam is eliminated, and doors and windows can be located anywhere beneath the smooth slab. Since all of the live and dead loads imposed on the building are carried by the columns, the walls and partitions may be placed or moved at random. This allows maximum flexibility at the time of construction and at any time in the future. Walls freed from structural requirements become mere curtains.

The savings derived from lift-slab structures are numerous and in many cases substantial. It is expected that greater economies will be realized when the method is better understood by the contractors in this area.

Great economies are on mechanical and electrical portions of the work. All electrical conduit is placed in the slab before the concrete is poured. When the slab is raised the horizontal conduit is in place, and the necessary risers and feeders between slabs can be ready to connect. The same applies to a large portion of the mechanical roughing in.

One of the major savings is in the performance of the structural work on the slabs at the ground level, resulting in more efficient use of labor and the use of a minimum of equipment. Another saving is in the placement of reinforcing steel. The material does not have to be elevated to the forms up in the air and is, therefore, not handled as many times. The lift-slab method results in a structure as sound as any constructed by the usual conventional methods, and at the same time results in savings of several thousand dollars.

The proposed addition to John Hay Library and other buildings in the planning stage should contribute greatly to the 1960 construction boom in Providence.

The City of Providence continues to move forward concerning its physical improvements. The new Highway Department Garage is now under construction on Ernest Street. The year 1959 was a banner year for the West River Project, with many new buildings started. Clifford Metals Sales, Inc.; Rivocor Inc. - New Jewelry Finishing Plant; Westcott Construction Co. - Mack Truck Inc. (Lessee) are well under construction and are expected to be completed soon.

The Point Street Re-development Project got underway. Most of the buildings are demolished and construction should start soon. The Lippitt Hill Re-development Project also got underway, and all indications point to an early start for this project.

The Roman Catholic Diocese with the new St. Charles Borromeo Convent; St. Margaret's Home and other smaller alteration jobs, too many to mention - contributed greatly to the 1959 construction boom.

Bryant College, with the New Dormitory, and other proposed projects should greatly contribute to its plant facilities.

DIVISION OF STRUCTURES AND ZONING

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection
112 Union Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Sir:

I respectfully submit for your information and consideration a report of the work of the Division of Structures and Zoning, for the year of 1959.

Attached hereto are two tables setting forth by wards and 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.

From the tables, the estimated cost of construction for the year 1959 is as follows:

New Buildings.....	242 Permits
Estimated Cost.....	$10,258,250.00
Additions & Alterations.....	1456 Permits
Estimated Cost.....	$2,654,650.00
Total Estimated Cost of Construction....	$12,912,900.00

Permits (not included in tables) issued during the year 1959, are as follows:

*	Razing of Dilapidated Buildings.....	168 Permits
	Sandblasting of Buildings.....	9 Permits
	Moving of Buildings.....	9 Permits
	Erection of Billboards.....	42 Permits
	Erection of Wall Signs.....	89 Permits
	Erection of Signs over Sidewalks.....	308 Permits
	Erection of Fire Escapes.....	187 Permits
	Construction of Sidewalk Vaults.....	1 Permit
	Use of Streets & Sidewalks.....	106 Permits
	Storage of Dangerous Chemicals.....	44 Permits
	TOTAL	963
	Permits Issued During Year 1959.....	2661

* Buildings Demolished for Public Improvements not included in the List of Permits above----------

North South Freeway (Southern Portion).....167 Buildings
Point Street Redevelopment..... 53 Buildings
Mary E. Fogarty Elementary School and
Future Play Grounds (Ocean, Oxford,
Burnside, Miner and Sayles Sts.)..... 48 Buildings
New School (Smith Hill)
(Danford, Vale, Clara Sts. and Camden Ave.)... 27 Buildings
West River Project..... 2 Buildings

TOTAL Buildings Demolished... 297

Note:

The above installations, not included in the tables, do not include estimated costs (not required by ordinance).

Family Units have been added during the year 1959 as a result of building activities through private channels, as follows:

(a) New Buildings One Family..... 131 Family Units
" " 7 Two Families.... 14 Family Units
" " 1 Multi-Family.... 14 Family Units
(b) Conversions..... 44 Family Units
TOTAL.... 203 Family Units

Total Inspections for the year 1959..... 14,480

** Total Fees collected during the year 1959.. $42,002.43

** Note:

Total Fees given is for the calendar year of 1959. This is done because the U. S. Government and other

agencies request it in this manner for statistical purposes. However, the fees collected by the Division of Structures and Zoning for the Fiscal Year, October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959---$38,534.63.

During the year 1959, this Department sent out 673 letters notifying the owners of Building or Zoning violations.

During the past year, this Division reviewed the design and plans for many major structures. The following are buildings for which permits were issued in 1959, with a declared estimated cost of $50,000.00 or more:

Intelex Systems Inc. 126 Corliss Street New Post Office (Mail Processing).....	3,800,000.00
Brown University (Pembroke) 119 Cushing St. & 180 Meeting St. New Dormitory.....	800,000.00
City of Providence 20 Ernest Street New Highway Department Garage.....	700,000.00
Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence St. Margaret's Home 153 Dean Street New Home for Women.....	550,000.00
Bryant College 154 Power Street New Dormitory.....	497,000.00
Providence Boys Club 11 Louisa Street New Boys Club.....	450,000.00

Intelex Systems Inc. 1-59 West River Street New Garage-Lubritorium Boiler Room.....	200,000.00
Brown University 180 George Street New Computing Center.....	180,000.00
Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence St. Charles Borromeo 167-179 Harrison Street New Convent.....	175,000.00
Clifford Metal Sales, Inc. 188-244 Corliss Street New Metal Sales-Storage.....	154,000.00
Berry-Hill Corp. 1 Washington Avenue New Bowling Alleys (44).....	150,000.00
Westcott Construction Co. Mack Truck Inc. (Lessee) New Sales-Service Bldg.....	144,000.00
Berry-Hill Corp. 1 Washington Avenue Addition to Bowling Alley (20).....	100,000.00
Rivocor Inc. 77-95 Corliss Street New Jewelry Finishing Plant.....	90,000.00
George Taylor 966 Hope Street New Apartment House.....	75,000.00
Fentress Realty Co. 361 Reservoir Avenue New Supermarket.....	60,000.00
Dr. Jack Savran 8 Woodland Terrace New One Family Dwelling Garage (2 cars) Beneath.....	57,500.00

The declared estimated costs of construction of the buildings and structures listed above is $8,182,500.00, or 63% of the total estimated construction cost figures; while the number of permits issued for the construction of these buildings is only 17, or less than 7% of the total number of permits issued for the construction of new buildings and alterations during the year 1959.

The declared estimated cost of construction figures in this report are fairly accurate since we have a Plan Examiner who prepared the cost data on all types of building construction for which a building permit was issued by the Department. These figures are revised and brought up to date every year. The average unit costs this year were slightly above those of last year.

Respectfully submitted,

NICHOLAS DiBENEDETTO,
Chief Inspector of
Structures and Zoning

BUILDING ACTIVITIES DURING THE YEAR 1959

Private building operations during the year 1959 in the City of Providence, with a total estimated cost of $12,912,900.00, is $4,218,500.00 more than the 1958 estimated cost of construction--a rise of 32%. This increase in estimated costs of construction was due to several large jobs, namely, The Intelex Systems, Brown University Dormitory and the City Garage. Residential buildings accounted for approximately 20% of the total estimated cost figures. New one-family dwellings, with a total estimated cost of $1,604,000.00 for 1959, account for 12% of the total estimated cost of building construction.

During the year 1959--1456 permits were issued for the construction of new buildings, additions and alterations to existing buildings--50 permits less than the number of permits during the previous year, 1958--a decrease of 3%. Other permits separately listed in this report, issued in 1959, total 963--a decrease of 74 over the 1958 figures--a decrease of 7%.

The estimated cost figures for additions and alterations to existing buildings during the year 1959 show a decrease of $1,782,150.00, or a 40% decrease over 1958 estimated cost figures. A careful study of the tables will provide the answers to the differences in percentages which arise from declared estimated cost

figures and the number of permits issued during the same periods.

A list of buildings, for which permits were issued in 1959 with a declared estimated cost of construction of $50,000.00 or more, were set forth herein for purposes of clarification and information pertaining to those differences in percentages.

NEW YORK

		WARDS														
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	No.	EST. COST
DWELLINGS 1 FAMILY	No.	-	16	7	22	58	18	5	2	3	-	-	-	-	131	$1,604,000
	Est. Cost	-	422,500	76,000	213,000	586,550	199,000	55,000	25,500	26,450	-	-	-	-		
DWELLINGS 2 FAMILIES	No.	-	-	1	-	2	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	7	111,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	18,000	-	31,000	32,000	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	-		
MULTI-FAMILIES	No.	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	75,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	75,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
CHURCHES, HOMES, ETC.	No.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	3	748,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	175,000	-	-	24,000	-	550,000		
AMUSEMENT & RECREATION	No.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	608,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150,000	458,000	-	-	-		
OFFICE BUILDINGS AND BANKS	No.	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	46,400
	Est. Cost	42,000	-	-	-	3,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,400	-		
PUBLIC & MUNICIPAL	No.	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3,800,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	3,800,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
SCHOOLS	No.	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1,477,000
	Est. Cost	1,477,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
GASOLINE STATIONS	No.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3	41,500
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	-	-	13,500	-	-	10,000	-	18,000	-	-		
GARAGES	No.	-	1	5	8	17	4	4	2	8	1	1	1	2	54	991,950
	Est. Cost	-	800	7,700	207,300	16,700	5,200	4,000	2,000	740,600	600	1,800	1,800	2,450		
STORES	No.	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	2	1	-	-	8	147,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	18,000	7,500	1,500	-	60,000	7,000	44,000	9,000	-	-		
STOREHOUSES	No.	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	-	2	3	-	-	1	12	267,300
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	195,000	-	-	13,100	-	21,000	33,200	-	-	5,000		
MANUFACTORIES AND SHOPS	No.	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	2	-	1	9	331,100
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	230,000	-	-	-	-	-	93,500	6,400	-	1,200		
OIL BURNERS	No.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
MISCELLANEOUS	No.	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	9,000
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	6,500	2,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
TOTAL NUMBER BY WARDS		5	17	14	36	80	26	12	6	18	12	6	3	5		
ESTIMATED COST BY WARDS		1,519,000	423,300	176,700	4,669,800	647,250	252,200	72,100	262,500	985,050	629,300	59,200	3,200	559,650		

TOTAL EST. COST $10,258,250

TOTAL NEW PERMITS 242

ALTERATIONS

		WARDS														
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	No.	EST. COST
DWELLINGS 1 FAMILY	No.	38	73	18	12	74	25	21	15	42	11	9	7	9	354	$ 349,500
	Est. Cost	61,500	96,000	14,300	7,500	63,900	27,350	15,750	10,200	31,900	7,050	3,150	5,900	5,000		
DWELLINGS 2 FAMILIES	No.	20	27	19	15	37	35	51	17	41	18	16	8	23	327	319,950
	Est. Cost	29,800	39,750	28,550	13,350	41,050	36,750	47,050	11,800	25,500	10,400	9,700	7,700	18,550		
MULTI-FAMILIES	No.	14	7	5	9	22	22	17	24	24	12	24	15	25	220	191,500
	Est. Cost	16,650	5,300	13,550	10,600	21,650	20,350	14,050	12,700	15,800	7,900	12,700	14,550	25,700		
CHURCHES, HOMES, ETC.	No.	3	4	3	1	-	-	3	2	2	1	3	11	4	37	183,700
	Est. Cost	5,050	24,600	25,850	15,000	-	-	20,600	1,100	15,300	9,000	8,300	51,400	7,500		
AMUSEMENT & RECREATION	No.	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	6	120,000
	Est. Cost	16,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	100	3,500		
OFFICE BUILDINGS AND BANKS	No.	5	3	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	17	1	32	99,400
	Est. Cost	9,400	4,400	1,500	800	-	7,800	-	-	500	2,800	1,000	70,750	450		
PUBLIC & MUNICIPAL	No.	2	1	2	4	3	3	1	1	5	3	1	6	3	35	58,700
	Est. Cost	600	4,000	600	12,900	900	900	300	2,000	15,000	900	300	19,400	900		
SCHOOLS	No.	10	9	2	4	3	8	2	7	2	3	1	9	3	63	391,750
	Est. Cost	16,900	19,300	12,500	10,600	13,000	82,900	3,000	145,050	20,500	11,050	10,200	27,850	19,000		
GASOLINE STATIONS	No.	3	-	3	9	2	2	5	4	9	2	4	7	8	58	103,500
	Est. Cost	900	-	3,350	7,350	850	13,600	3,050	3,100	48,550	1,200	4,650	8,200	7,700		
GARAGES	No.	4	4	3	2	4	4	4	3	8	2	2	1	2	43	17,550
	Est. Cost	850	2,300	650	400	2,050	1,800	2,100	1,500	1,750	2,500	700	150	800		
STORES	No.	8	6	6	7	9	8	7	14	5	2	9	85	20	186	459,250
	Est. Cost	10,200	10,300	25,100	19,250	4,700	5,400	4,050	11,300	11,500	200	10,900	309,150	36,400		
STOREHOUSES	No.	1	-	-	3	2	2	-	-	-	1	3	2	7	21	71,350
	Est. Cost	3,100	-	-	11,050	7,000	20,100	-	-	-	1,200	350	500	28,050		
MANUFACTORIES AND SHOPS	No.	2	-	2	5	-	3	1	8	8	3	4	12	13	61	265,500
	Est. Cost	600	-	10,600	21,500	-	1,650	2,000	49,300	72,750	26,900	3,000	30,100	46,900		
OIL BURNERS	No.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Est. Cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
MISCELLANEOUS	No.	5	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	13	23,000
	Est. Cost	11,700	2,700	800	2,800	-	-	-	2,200	2,500	-	-	100	200		
TOTAL NUMBER BY WARDS		117	135	65	74	156	113	112	96	149	59	77	182	121		
ESTIMATED COST BY WARDS		183,650	208,650	137,550	133,100	155,100	216,500	113,550	250,250	361,550	81,100	65,150	545,850	200,650		

TOTAL EST. COST $2,654,650

TOTAL ALT. PERMITS 1,456

CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK - 1960

In general, the business outlook for 1960 is very promising. Many forces are pushing the economy upward, and the upturn from the 1958 recession has gathered enough momentum to create a boom in the next twelve to eighteen months, all other things being equal. Two situations may prevent all other things from being equal. One of these is the possibility of further labor-management troubles, and the other may come from tight money. However, it seems that the high interest rates may have some influence on consumer spending and business investment in new plant equipment, but there seems to be little question about their effect on housing.

It may be said that the "population explosion" will be a contributing factor. To provide living quarters for our additional population, and because there must also be some replacement of houses for reasons ranging from highway building to obsolescence, we have the prospect of building many new houses.

Housing is only one category. Schools are just barely keeping abreast of the new increase in school age population now; prospective increases insure tremendous future demand for new classrooms. We have only begun to lick our present traffic problems; highway construction will be expanded far beyond the present program as

traffic grows. Stores, factories, utilities--almost anything you can name--will have to keep up with population growth and technological change.

Of course, this will create problems--but problems are challenges. Being constructive, the construction industry will occupy a prime position as we build for the future.

DIVISION OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

The past year has shown a steady increase in the use of electric power in Providence. The increase in the use of electric power results in part from the additional industrial uses; also in commercial and residential uses, such as all-electric kitchens, complete air-conditioning systems, and higher and higher levels of illumination.

During the past year, many major electrical installations have been undertaken. They include a multi-story office building, major hospital additions and public buildings--all of which have extensive electrical distribution systems.

Permits for the above types of equipment have greatly increased the difficulty of inspection by the Electrical Inspector, as well as the electrical plan checking.

During the past year, the Electrical Code Advisory Committee has studied problems affecting the cost, safety and adequacy of electrical installations. Many recommendations for code changes have been presented to the Building Code Revision Board for consideration and review. The adoption of these changes will keep the electrical code modern and will recognize the newest developments in wiring, electrical equipment and design.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTION DIVISION

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection
112 Union Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Sir:

I respectfully submit the following report of the Revenue and Operation of the Electrical Inspection Division for the period of the fiscal year 1958-1959.

REPORT

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

1.	Eighty-eight (88) Limited Premises Permits	440.00
2.	Three-thousand eight-hundred and ninety-six (3,896) permits for installations of electrical wiring and apparatus including alterations and repairs.	15,763.39
	Total of fees collected.....	$16,203.39

NOTES:

1.	Refund on one (1) Limited Premises Duplicate Permit	5.00
2.	Refund on one (1) Permit for installation which was revoked.	15.50
	Total refund.....	$20.50
3.	Corrected Fee Total	$16,182.89

OPERATIONS: A summary of the work done by the Electrical Inspection Division from September 30, 1958 to October 1, 1959:

1.	Number of rough wiring inspections.....	502
2.	Number of defective installations re-inspected..	995
3.	Number of Certificates of Approval issued.....	2816
4.	Number of inspections after fire.....	966
5.	Number of investigations requested by the Narragansett Electric Company and Fire Department.....	292
6.	Number of special investigations.....	4766
7.	Number of re-inspections.....	1889
	Total Number of Inspections	12,226
8.	Letters to owners.....	735
9.	Number of disconnects.....	10
10.	Signs illuminated.....	281
11.	Signs not illuminated.....	81
	Total	362

The following comment is based on the increase in the number of inspections during the fiscal year 1958-1959 over the number of inspections made by the Electrical Division in the previous fiscal year 1957-1958.

COMMENT

The Division of Electrical Installations of the City of Providence, Department of Building Inspection, has set high standards for competence of its personnel in order that it may provide competent and efficient inspection

3. Acted as Consultant on Code problems to other Departments of the City Government and to all that needed this service, including Architects, Engineers, Contractors, Manufacturer's Representatives, Journeyman Electricians, property owners and the Public in general.

This service compliments the actual field inspection work of the Electrical Division to the extent that the Department of Building Inspection enjoyed better public relations through the efforts of the Electrical Division.

Respectfully submitted,

PETER J. HICKS, JR.,
Chief Electrical Inspector

DIVISION OF PLUMBING, DRAINAGE AND GAS PIPING

The operations and activities of the Plumbing Division have continued to change during the past year, because of the shift from the majority of the services being requested in new construction to inspection and investigation in existing buildings. Alterations, remodeling, replacements, additions, conversions and removals, along with problems concerned with the maintenance of plumbing and systems, cover the great majority of cases demanding their services.

A new code for private swimming pools is in the making and will soon be presented to the Building Code Revision Board for review and consideration.

DIVISION OF PLUMBING, DRAINAGE AND GAS PIPING

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection
112 Union Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Sir:

As requested, this will show the activities and statistical record of the Plumbing Division of Plumbing and Drainage for the fiscal year October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959:

Plumbing Inspections	5,920	
Drain Inspections	1,431	
Miscellaneous Visits	484	
Minimum Housing Visits	1,495	
Convalescent Homes Visits	30	.....Total 9,360
Plumbing Plans Filed	3,481	
Drain Plans Filed	493	.....Total 3,974
Work on Old Buildings	3,306	
Work on New Buildings	175	.....Total 3,481
Sewer Connections	3,467	
Cesspool Connections	14	.....Total 3,481
Final Plumbing Plans Passed	3,334	

Estimated Cost of Plumbing Plans	$1,217,154.00
Estimated Cost of Drain Plans	88,194.00
TOTAL	$1,305,348.00

Limited Sprinkler Licenses Issued	$ 25.00
Limited Drainlayer Licenses Issued	200.00
TOTAL	$225.00

Fees for Plumbing, Drain and Limited Licenses $12,886.67

Approval of Plans

There were 374 Blue Prints and Specifications submitted to this Department for corrections and approval by Architects and Engineers; of this number, 118 were not approved, but were corrected, and 1044 questions in regard to Plumbing and Drainage were answered. The work was necessary in order that the Plumbing being installed would comply with the City of Providence Plumbing Law.

Court Cases

There were 89 illegal plumbing and drainage installations that were corrected and legalized without court action, by sending of legal letters to the owners of the properties and by investigations by inspectors of this Department.

Aged and Convalescent Homes

At the request of Vincent DiMase, Director of the Department of Building Inspection, this Department inspected thirty homes for the aged and convalescent. The inspections were required under the Rhode Island State Law, Chapter 374, for approval of the plumbing installed in the building before a license may be issued by the State for an aged and convalescent home.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES J. DOWNEY,
Inspector III

DIVISION OF AIR POLLUTION, MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

The relationship between the building structure today and the mechanical and electrical appurtenances that it houses, has changed in recent years. The notable advancements made in electrical and mechanical fields are some of the features which distinguish today's operation of a building from those of twenty-five years ago. Many spectacular accomplishments have been made in the sphere of mechanical construction in such areas as: high velocity air-conditioning systems; package air-conditioning; high temperature pressure boilers; low temperature vessels; swimming pool construction and improvements in back-flow prevention devices.

These complex devices must be inspected to insure safe installations. The watchdogs of safety are the inspectors. Inspection of mechanical or electrical equipment can no longer be superficial or cursory. If lives and property are to be protected, such inspection must be thorough and painstaking.

In order to keep in step with the technological age, the Mechanical Division must have highly qualified inspectors who are trained in their particular specialties.

DIVISION OF AIR POLLUTION, MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director
Department of Building Inspection
112 Union Street
Providence, Rhode Island

Dear Sir:

The following is the annual report covering the various activities, operation and revenue of the Division of Air Pollution and Mechanical Equipment and Installations for the fiscal year October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959.

Progress in the control of Air Pollution continued during the year as several industrial and commercial plants installed or replaced air pollution control equipment. In one location the control equipment is collecting almost 2000 pounds of cinders and dust which was formerly spewed into the atmosphere to settle on the surrounding neighborhood.

Another plant, which was formerly the source of a continuing nuisance to its neighbors, applied strict process controls to its operation with such excellent results that very few complaints were registered against this former chronic offender.

Most of the larger power plants and many other industrial and commercial plants have installed smoke detectors and alarms as now required by the Building Ordinance. This equipment not only minimizes the duration of smoke violations by alerting the boiler room personnel but actually results in savings of fuel dollars in many cases.

Encouraging progress was made in enforcing the ban on all open fire burning with the fine cooperation of the Providence Fire Department. Whenever called, a piece of fire apparatus has responded to a still alarm from members of our staff. Form letters quoting the law and asking citizen cooperation have been left with violators wherever open fire burning has been observed.

Dust from trucks which carry materials which may be windblown and dust from open areas was adequately controlled during the year. We gratefully acknowledge the help of the Providence Police Department in this phase of our work.

During the year an accelerated program of controlling the invisible type of air pollution, such as odors and fumes from industrial processes, was undertaken. Installation of control equipment in several jewelry plants and refineries has abated violations from these sources.

The problem of exhaust fumes from diesel and gasoline motor vehicles is not being overlooked. However, no feasible solution is yet available in spite of a great deal of research. Meanwhile, the United Transportation Company has equipped their vehicles with a new type of fuel injector which has reduced the amount of offensive exhaust. Buses observed smoking excessively are reported by this Division to the Transit Company, which takes the bus off the road for immediate repairs. At our suggestion, orders were given to operators to stop the engine when the bus is to be

stopped for longer than one minute. These steps tend to reduce the nuisance and pollution from this source.

The regulation requiring adequate lint traps for clothes driers and better process control in dry cleansing establishments has lessened violations from these locations.

Modernization of the City of Providence Schools heating plants has included conversion to gas or oil in many instances. These fuels burned efficiently through approved burners, resulted in much less smoke and fly ash emission from these sources.

As a result of the disastrous school fire in Chicago, a survey of heating and sprinkler equipment in all public, private and parochial schools in the city was made by this Division. Findings during the surveys resulted in additional safety requirements being imposed, making adequately safe installations even safer.

The elimination of a nauseating odor originating from burning rubbish in a dump just over the Providence-Pawtucket City line was made possible through the splendid cooperation of the Air Pollution Control officials of Pawtucket.

At the request of this Division, the Code Revision Committee approved amendments to the section of the Building Code pertaining to Flues and Vents for gas fuels. These changes make it mandatory to vent all fuel burning heating appliances and will result in a reduction of accidents resulting from faulty combustion.

The Chief of the Division attended the Annual Convention of the Air Pollution Control Association held in Los Angeles, California, and was privileged to represent the New England Section at the business meeting there. Cleaner Air Week was highlighted as usual by the release of weather balloons in a ceremony attended by members of civic groups and covered by the Press, Radio and Television. Members of the Division also participated in ceremonies held in Boston during Cleaner Air Week.

The Chief of the Division spoke before various groups during the year, including the Independent Oil Dealers Association of R. I., and the City of Warwick Committee on Air Pollution Control.

Our dedicated staff of inspectors continued to work most diligently, and their work has been a potent factor in the progress of our air pollution control program.

The cooperation of civic groups such as the League of Women Voters, the Providence Chamber of Commerce and the R. I. Medical Society continues to be a major factor in our program of cleaner air.

A most cooperative local press continues to bring out essential facts concerning the need for cleaner air and has figured prominently in the progress made in air pollution control.

The analytical results of samples, taken in conjunction with the National Air Sampling Network of the U. S. Public

Health Service, show that progress still continues in cleaning up the air over Providence.

With the addition of another inspector, the Division has been able to increase the number of inspections made of sprinkler and air-conditioning equipment. Permits were issued for air-conditioning, heating, ventilation and refrigeration equipment; natural gas equipment and appliances; tanks for storage of flammable liquids and oil burning equipment; emergency generators; sprinklers; elevators, dumbwaiters and conveyor equipment.

The Division is now actively engaged in the inspection of all mechanical equipment installations as required by the Building Code except the annual inspection of elevators, which is still being done by the State. Steps are being taken to take over the function in the near future.

When annual inspecting of elevators is taken over from the State, it will be necessary to increase the staff of this Division by two inspectors and one clerk, to handle the additional workload.

The inspection of mechanical equipment and installations results in maximum safety requirements being adhered to with greater protection for the citizens of Providence.

The number of applications submitted for Stationary Engineer and Boiler Operator Licenses continues at a high rate. Of the 165 applications made, 151 were granted after the applicants successfully passed the required examinations.

The following is an accounting of the Division of Air Pollution and Mechanical Equipment and Installations from October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959:

REVENUE

Oil Burners	931.16	
Gas Burners	2878.73	
Gas Water Heaters	5106.10	
Boilers	2309.06	
Piping	277.60	
Incinerator	37.00	
Elevators	701.32	
Emergency Generators	57.75	
Furnaces	697.55	
Radiation	519.18	
Tanks	315.08	
Ductwork	406.72	
Sprinklers	579.81	
Conveyor	75.00	
Air Conditioning	531.02	
Unit Heaters	115.30	
Dust Collector	174.50	
Ventilation	301.55	
Smoke Detector	25.52	
Lifts	41.00	
Compressors	45.50	
Ovens	92.95	
Dumbwaiters	60.71	
Controls	35.76	
Dryers	98.05	
Consoles	1216.00	
Refrigeration	103.30	
Fuel Pumps	73.00	
	$ 17,806.22	$ 17,806.22
NEW LICENSES:		
Boiler Operator, Stationary Engineer and Refrigerating Machine Operator	$ 755.00	
RENEWALS:	$ 3,496.00	
	$ 4,251.00	$ 4,251.00
Grand Total		$ 22,057.22

There were 4,963 permits issued from October 1, 1958 to September 30, 1959 for the following equipment:

EQUIPMENT	UNITS
Oil Burners	312
Gas Burners	860
Gas Water Heaters	2540
Boilers	322
Piping	3
Incinerators	4
Elevators	21
Emergency Generators	9
Furnaces	191
Radiation	128
Tanks	145
Ductwork	93
Sprinklers	25
Conveyors	4
Air Conditioners	71
Unit Heaters	70
Dust Collectors	3
Ventilation	31
Smoke Detectors	5
Lifts	5
Compressors	9
Ovens	9
Dumbwaiters	5
Controls	11
Dryers	80
Consoles	609
Refrigeration	5
Fuel Pumps	3

Licenses: Boiler Operator, Stationary Engineer, Refrigerating Machine Operator

Number of Licenses Issued

New	Renewal
151	1748

INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Annual Fuel Burning Equipment Inspection And Permits Issued	2662
Gas Burner Inspections	860
Oil Burner Inspections	312
Gas Water Heater Inspections	2540
Boiler Inspections	322
Piping Inspections	3
Incinerator Inspections	4
Elevator Inspections	21
Emergency Generators Inspections	9
Furnace Inspections	191
Radiation Inspections	128
Tank Inspections	145
Ductwork Inspections	93
Sprinkler Inspections	25
Conveyor Inspections	4
Air Conditioner Inspections	71
Unit Heater Inspections	70
Dust Collector Inspections	3
Ventilation Inspections	31
Smoke Detector Inspections	5
Lift Inspections	5
Compressor Inspections	9
Oven Inspections	9
Dumbwaiter Inspections	5
Control Inspections	11
Dryer Inspections	80
Console Inspections	609
Refrigeration Inspections	5
Fuel Pump Inspections	3
Complaints Received and Investigated	270
Violations Noted and Investigated	511
Investigations	1691
Control Tests	242
Reinspections	113
	11,062

During the course of the year the Air Pollution and Mechanical Division examined numerous plans and specifications, held many conferences with Architects, Engineers, General Contractors and Equipment Installers, to encourage compliance with Building Code requirements.

In addition, members of the staff were always available to serve as consultants on Code problems and difficulties encountered during installation, to everyone requiring this service, all of which resulted in better public relation.

Respectfully submitted,

GENARO G. COSTANTINO,
Chief Air Pollution and
Mechanical Inspection

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

The management and administration of the Department of Building Inspection are the responsibilities of the Director. The varied activities of the Department include the enforcement of the Building Code as it relates to construction, alteration, repair, demolition of buildings and structures; the installation, alteration, repair, use and operation of all heating, plumbing, lighting, ventilating, refrigerating, electrical and mechanical equipment and appliances within or attached to buildings; and the enforcement of the City's Zoning Ordinance.

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

It also performs department-wide service relating to personnel, budget, analysis, fee collections, auditing and accounting operations, procurement of supplies and equipment, motor vehicles, statistics and records.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

REVENUE SUMMARY

The 1958-1959 Departmental revenue totalled:

Division of Structures & Zoning	$38,534.63
Division of Electrical Installations and Limited Premises Licenses	16,203.39
Division of Air Pollution and Mechanical Equipment	22,057.22
Division of Plumbing, Drainage and Gas Piping	12,886.67
Zoning Board Applications	1,240.00
Building Board Applications	460.00
Housing Board Applications	80.00
TOTAL	$91,461.91

One cashier handled these revenues.

ONE FEE FOR PERMITS

Under our Building Code, one of the new features is that an Owner or Contractor may take out one permit for the entire job and pay one fee; this includes structural, electrical, mechanical and plumbing work.

The following is a list of jobs for which one fee was paid during 1959:

JOB	ESTIMATED COST	FEE PAID
119 Cushing St. (180 Meeting St.) Brown University (Pembroke) New Dormitory	$1,067,000.00	$968.50
153 Dean St. Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence St. Margaret's Home	669,000.00	769.50
154 Power St. Bryant College New Dormitory	650,000.00	760.00
11 Louisa St. Providence Boys Club New Boys Club	450,000.00	635.00
180 George St. Brown University New Computing Center	282,000.00	468.00
97 Dorrance St. Narragansett Hotel Alterations	43,516.00	75.55
140 Prospect St. Halsey Corp. Alterations	29,000.00	122.00
76 Westminster St. Turk's Head Bldg. (Davis & Davis Office) Alterations	16,000.00	74.00
357 Benefit St. J. W. Brown Alterations	15,000.00	70.00

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Keeping Modern. New materials and new methods of construction are constantly being submitted to the Department of Building Inspection. Investigation and evaluation of these materials, products, and method of construction is the task of the Director. Meetings and conferences with representatives of the Building industry are held throughout the year. This procedure is necessary so that the Department of Building Inspection is kept constantly up-to-date with new developments in the building industry, and so that the building industry is able to maintain these new ideas, materials, and methods within the confines of the Building Code. From these meetings, conferences and resultant decision making, the City's Building Code is kept modern and in step with the scientific advancement of the age.

The Department of Building Inspection, through its various divisions, attempts to secure voluntary compliance with the code provisions rather than rely on the prosecution of violators of code requirements. This practice has had the result of making the City of Providence outstanding among the larger cities in safe building construction. As with any established law, there are a few citizens who fail to comply. Additional effort, and in some cases, court action must be used in order to obtain full compliance. During the year 1959 sixteen Court cases were disposed of through Court action.

BUILDING CODE REVISION BOARD

The Building Code Revision Board consists of thirteen (13) members, ten (10) of whom are appointed by the Mayor, subject to the approval of the City Council.

The Director, the Chief of the Fire Department, and the Chairman of the City Council on Ordinances are ex-officio members of the Board.

The Building Code Revision Board has the power to approve rules and regulations proposed by the Director for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this code, and to secure the intent and beneficial effects thereof. This will provide a means of maintaining a modern, effective and flexible code which will be responsive to progress in architecture and engineering. It will also keep abreast of improvements in materials and techniques.

The Building Code requires the Director to submit to the Building Code Revision Board requests for Code revisions. These requests may be based on improvements in materials and methods of construction or design, and on investigations of fire and structural damage to buildings. The Director's requests may also be received from industry, other city departments, and interested individuals. Recommendations from the professional men of the building industry are continually solicited.

After the Revision Board has held public hearings on the proposed revisions to resolve the differences of

opinions, the amendments are submitted to the Ordinance Committee for recommendations to the City Council for enactment into ordinance.

By this procedure the Department of Building Inspection will maintain one of the most modern, effective and flexible codes in the nation.

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BUILDING BOARD OF REVIEW

The Building Board of Review consists of five (5) members appointed by the Mayor, subject to the approval of the City Council. The Director is the advisory member of the Board.

The Board by a concurring vote of four (4) members can vary or modify the provisions of the code in such a manner that the spirit of the code is observed and public safety secured, and substantial justice done where there are practical difficulties in the way of carrying out the strict letter of the code.

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ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW

The Zoning Board of Review, comprising six (6) members, hears appeals in zoning matters where a citizen alleges an administrative official erred in interpreting the zoning laws. It also passes upon requests for special exceptions and variances to the Zoning Ordinance. The Director is the advisory member of the Board.

CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY

Certificates of Occupancy were issued in compliance with the provisions of the Building and Zoning Codes. These certificates cover new building construction, additions and alterations to existing buildings, change of occupancy, use of land, use of equipment, etc.

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C O N C L U S I O N

The prestige of the Department of Building Inspection depends upon the people in charge. Our employees in the office or the Inspectors in the field have been trained to be kind and courteous to the public.

It is unfortunate that, in too many cases, the Department of Building Inspection is just taken as a matter of course; or perhaps a place to which complaints may be referred. Actually, although only a partial amount of complaints received are justified, the Department of Building Inspection, regulated not only for the welfare of the community, but also for the health and safety of the residents,--strives to cement good relations with the public at large.

In the past few years our Department has gained considerable prestige with the public because people appreciate honesty and sincere work, whether it be in the clerk's

division or in the executive division. This makes, what I would term, self-satisfaction in carrying out our duties.

Generally speaking, the enforcement of the various codes and ordinances under our control has brought respect to the Department, not only from the officials but from the majority in the community we serve. I feel that if we have pleased the majority we have actually made some accomplishments.

What has our new performance code accomplished?

The primary purpose of a building code is to protect the people of the community from the serious tragic losses from fire which would occur without code regulation. As shown from experience, suitable laws are necessary to cause people to build so that they will not present fire explosion hazards to endanger the lives of tenants and occupants of the buildings or their neighbors, or unduly endanger the lives of firemen employed by the community to fight fires.

It is, of course, not economically possible to require all buildings to be built so that serious fires would not occur and no danger to life would be anticipated. The provisions of any proper code must be carefully balanced using fire protection engineering judgment so as to allow builders to build according to the desires of owners and the design inclinations of the Architects and Engineers using any method, style of architecture, materials or assemblies, so long as they do not form a combination which presents an improper hazard to life from fire.

The Providence Building Code covers the following items and has provided a reasonable degree of fire safety:

(1) Restrictions on wood frame and unprotected metal construction in the congested first fire district.

(2) Regulation of roof coverings. This is essential to avoid fires spreading from flying brands landing on roofs.

(3) Limitations of heights of buildings, in relation principally to the type of construction, considering safety to life of occupants, and the fact that in any building of such height the fire department cannot fight a fire effectively in upper stories from street level, the floors and other structural members must resist any ordinary fire in the building without collapsing.

(4) Restriction of areas not only in relation to types of construction but also in relation to occupancy, sprinkler protection, height and separation from other buildings. The larger the area of building, the greater the difficulty of fighting a fire in it, and the greater the likelihood of a serious fire involving other nearby buildings.

(5) Protection of exterior wall openings where windows expose or are exposed by other nearby buildings. A reasonable standard of protection to window openings is essential to provide a fire department with the opportunity to stop a fire from spreading from building to building.

(6) Protection of stairs, elevator and other vertical openings. From the standpoint of safety to life of occupants from fire, this is a most important accomplishment. From records of annual loss of life in upper stories of old buildings without such enclosures of vertical openings--this amply demonstrates the truth.

(7) Protection of openings in fire walls--a necessary detail to make walls so that they will serve the intended purpose.

(8) Thickness and fire resistance of exterior walls and fire walls.

(9) Chimneys, heat producing appliances, air conditioning and exhaust systems. These are either important sources of fire or serve to spread smoke and fire through a building. An air-conditioned building without fire dampers in the ducts would spread fire and smoke throughout a building faster than open stairways ever did.

(10) Standards for fire-resistive construction is an important feature.

(11) Requirements for sprinklers and standpipes justify sizeable increases in area of buildings, and are useful in making buildings reasonably fire safe which would not otherwise be safe for the occupants and type of construction.

(12) Fire stops are important to fire safety of wood frame buildings and also to buildings of other types of construction.

(13) Exit requirements accomplish life safety when coordinated with other fire safety requirements. Stairs and exits are probably the most important element of design affecting fire safety. We require enclosed and adequate exits but also safe avenues to them.

(14) Parapets prevent fire spreading over dividing walls from roof to roof, and also serve as a shield to firemen fighting from roofs of adjoining buildings.

(15) Quality of materials and workmanship is important in fire protection and fire resistance.

(16) The Building Code has another important purpose besides control of fire hazards. That is--it also prevents buildings from structural failure or collapse either during construction or after occupancy.

Proper enforcement of the Building Code is as important as the contents of the Building Code. Pressure on the building inspector to relax the code requirements for fire safety could undermine the whole program. The success of any Building Code depends upon the high standard of enforcement with the proper backing from the municipal administration.

The role of the Department of Building Inspection in maintaining order among buildings and land is a crucial fight, just as the Police Department maintains order among people. However, we do enjoy our work even though time is not always our own. We enjoy serving the citizens of Providence and also enjoy working with other officials and municipal employees, who likewise are trying to do their utmost for the betterment of the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent DiMase

VINCENT DiMASE, DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION