

**FIFTEENTH  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**1970 - 1971**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
BUILDING INSPECTION**

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



IN CITY COUNCIL

**MAR 2 1972**

IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THIS REPORT BE RECEIVED.

*Vincent Crescia*  
CLERK

CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION  
112 Union Street

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

1970 - 1971

VINCENT DIMASE, P.E.  
DIRECTOR

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January 7, 1972

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

Gentlemen:

The Fifteenth Annual Report of operations, work carried on, and achievements of the Department of Building Inspection during the year 1970-1971 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.

The Revision Committee continued to work on proposed revisions and amendments to the building code, some changes requested by HUD. This is our continued and constant effort to keep pace with new developments, materials and methods in order to provide lowest cost of construction within adequate and acceptable standards of health and safety.

During the past year the permit valuation amounted to \$29,609,207.07. The Department collected \$125,195.38 in permit fees.

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

Respectfully submitted,

*Vincent DiMase*

Vincent DiMase, P.E.  
Director

## THE BUILDING CODE

The Providence Building Code is a performance code prepared with the definite objective of meeting the public interest, providing safety to life as well as property, and giving due regard to provisions affecting health and sanitation.

In order for a building code to serve its purpose of providing for safety, health and public welfare, a program for effective administration and enforcement should be established. Without such a program it cannot be expected that all buildings will be constructed in full compliance with the code. Human nature is such that it is generally recognized that laws are not of much value unless they are effectively enforced.

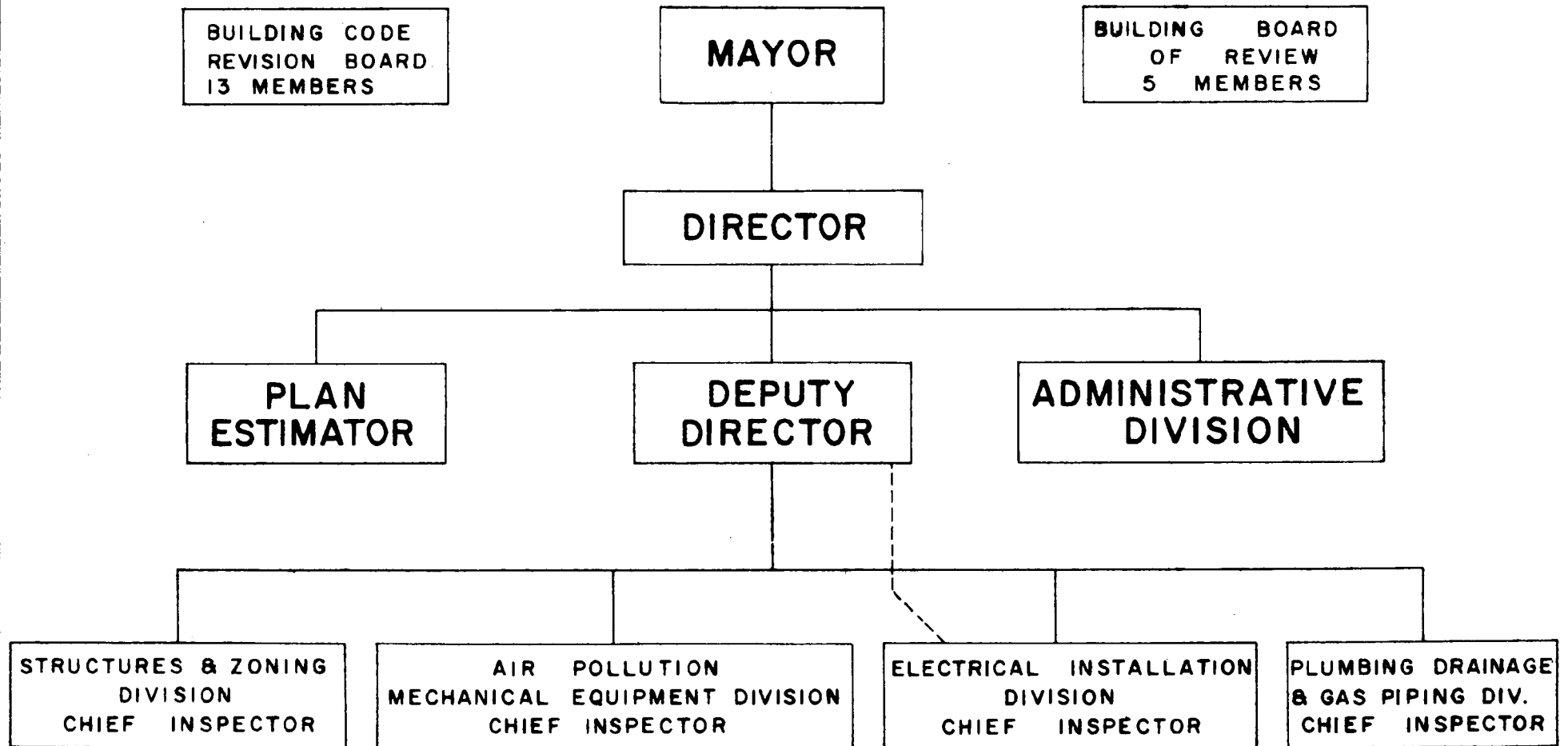
The enforcement of the Building Code and Zoning Ordinance are necessary for the development of the community.

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

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.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

## ORGANIZATION CHART



## THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

The Department of Building Inspection operates under the provisions of the Providence Building Code which requires that it enforce "...all ordinances and laws relating to the construction, alteration, repair, use and operation of all heating, plumbing, lighting, ventilating, refrigeration, electrical and mechanical appliances and equipment therein;...and...the Zoning Ordinance of the City".

Effectively carrying out the responsibilities of this Department requires constant research and study of codes enforced by this Department and their review and revision. Maximum service to the public and efficient and effective plan checking and inspection are enhanced by well written and up to date codes. Because Providence enforces a Model Performance Code of the Building Officials and Code Administrators International, the Federal Workable Program was again recertified.

Construction methods and materials are constantly changing. During this past year, the Department of Building Inspection continued its policy of encouraging better building construction in the City....through service rather than enforcement.

Providence scored another first in the United States by allowing the use of Filigree Wideslabs Floors in the Regency East Apartment House Building in the Weybosset Hill Project.

The Filigree Wideslab floors are the combination of a precast left-in place concrete form, contain all of the bottom reinforcing and a poured in place structural concrete topping, containing all of the top reinforcing, which through composite action results in the equivalent of a poured in place concrete floor. Filigree Wideslab floors are designed in accordance with the requirements of the A.C.I. 318-63 code, Chapter 25, composite construction. As in the case with poured in place construction, each Filigree job having different load span conditions is designed by conventional methods and then is checked under the provisions of Chapter 25 of the A.C.I. code to insure compliance with this section.

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, 1970 to June 30, 1971.

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 19

## 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. 71									10,000				5,000			15,000
Feb. 71					37,300											37,300
Mar. 71	65,000									3,000						68,000
Apr. 71	63,000									2,500			300,000			365,500
May 71	36,000				754,200	1,000				1,200			23,000			760,320
June 71	81,300	20,000														101,300
July 70	147,500	85,000		200,000		40,000				800	30,000				6,300	509,600
Aug. 70	32,500									1,200	100,000		31,000			164,700
Sept. 70	62,000					100,000							70,000			232,000
Oct. 70	95,000		80,000						12,000	1,400			15,000			203,400
Nov. 70	72,000	24,000	147,300							3,800			110,000		600	1,683,700
Dec. 70	81,000								31,500							112,500
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>735,300</b>	<b>129,000</b>	<b>155,300</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>757,930</b>	<b>141,000</b>			<b>53,500</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>130,000</b>		<b>554,000</b>		<b>6,900</b>	<b>11095,200</b>
NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS																
Jan. 71									1				1			2
Feb. 71					1											1
Mar. 71	5									1						6
Apr. 71	5									1			1			7
May 71	3				1	1				1			1			7
June 71	7	1														8
July 70	6	5		1		1				1	1				2	17
Aug. 70	3									1	1		2			7
Sept. 70	5					1							1			7
Oct. 70	7		1						1	1			1			11
Nov. 70	6	1	3							2			1		1	14
Dec. 70	2								1							3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>90</b>

# ESTIMATED COST OF BUILDING OPERATIONS BY MONTHS 19

## ALTERATIONS

MONTHS	DWELLING 1 FAMILY	DWELLING 2 FAMILY	MULTI FAMILY	CHURCHES HOMES, ETC.	AMUSEMENT & RECREATION	OFFICE BLDGS. & BANKS	PUBLIC AND MUNI.	SCHODLS	GASOLINE STATIONS	GARAGES	STORES	STORE- HOUSES	MFG. AND SHOPS	OIL BURNERS	MISC	TOTAL
Jan.71	3,300	4,000	6,200	4,300		35,500	1,600		13,900	3,500	90,200	4,500	2,000			169,000
Feb.71	12,800	6,850	7,000	22,500		61,000			1,000		53,300	3,700	50,400			218,550
Mar.71	23,100	12,400	12,900			10,000			2,500	600	44,700	3,900	16,600			126,700
Apr.71	28,400	41,400	18,750	1,800		7,000			16,000	750	1,300	13,400	18,450		2,100	149,350
May71	62,300	18,450	32,000			10,100		900	10,800		35,700	1,700	24,900		3,200	200,050
June71	28,000	47,950	20,300	273,000		55,250	75,650	8,000	10,400	9,800	37,700	5,600	287,500		8,200	867,350
July70	26,700	19,950	9,350		3,000	19,800		10,000	1,000	1,600	15,650	9,300	161,500		1,200	279,050
Aug70	26,850	13,600	29,000	2,200		27,200		7,500	3,800	500	50,050	3,250	1,100		2,900	167,950
Sept70	39,400	29,800	19,000		3,500	28,500	6,000		2,950	1,700	7,300	8,800	481,000		3,000	630,950
Oct.70	16,400	25,300	17,900	1,900		206,500			3,200		29,900	13,100	180,100		3,800	498,100
Nov.70	22,100	15,950	13,500			110,300		3,400	2,450		95,500	500	75,500		3,000	342,200
Dec.70	22,500	7,300	10,850	65,300	1,000				4,000		6,700	12,000	146,000		2,600	278,250
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>311,850</b>	<b>242,950</b>	<b>196,750</b>	<b>371,000</b>	<b>7,500</b>	<b>571,150</b>	<b>83,250</b>	<b>29,800</b>	<b>72,000</b>	<b>18,450</b>	<b>468,000</b>	<b>79,750</b>	<b>144,500</b>		<b>30,000</b>	<b>3927500</b>
NUMBER OF BUILDING PERMITS																
Jan.71	4	1	4	3		4	1		4	1	11	2	1			36
Feb.71	8	4	5	3		3			1		4	2	2			32
Mar.71	14	10	8			3			2	2	5	4	2			50
Apr.71	23	24	16	1		2			5	1	3	5	4		3	87
May71	25	16	10			3		1	2		11	2	4		2	76
June71	31	26	15	1		4	2	1	8	5	9	3	7		4	116
July70	14	14	3		1	2		1	5	4	4	3	6		4	61
Aug.70	13	11	17	1		4		1	3	1	7	2	1		3	64
Sept.70	12	13	10		1	2	1		3	2	9	3	6		1	63
Oct.70	7	14	10	2		4			2		6	4	6		2	57
Nov.70	13	9	7			5		1	3		5	1	6		2	52
Dec.70	6	4	7	2	1				1		4	1	2		3	31
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>47</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>725</b>

From the tables, the estimated cost of construction for the fiscal year from July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971 is as follows:

New Buildings	Permits 90
Estimated Cost	\$11,095,200
Additions & Alterations	Permits 725
Estimated Cost	\$3,927,500
Total Estimated Cost of Construction	\$15,022,700

Permits (Not included in tables) issued during the period from July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971 are as follows:

Razing of Dilapidated Buildings	Permits 346
Sandblasting of Buildings	Permits 5
Moving of Buildings	Permits 0
Roofs Recovered	Permits 41
Erection of Billboards	Permits 13
Erection of Wall Signs	Permits 40
Erection of Signs over Sidewalks	Permits 128
Erection of Fire Escapes	Permits 21
Construction of Vaults	Permits 0
Use of Streets & Sidewalks	Permits 22
Storage of Dangerous Chemicals	Permits 17
Storage of Petroleum Products in Bulk	Permits <u>0</u>
Total	633

(Total Permits Issued During the Fiscal Year were 1448)

Total number of buildings demolished in the City was 346, and total of approximately 612 dwelling units.

During the fiscal year, 232 family units were added as a result of private buildings activities.

The additional units are grouped as follows:

(a) New Buildings	
One Family	49 Family Units
Two Family	14 Family Units
Multiple Family	168 Family Units
(b) Conversions	<u>1</u> Family Units
Total	232

The total fees collected for the calendar year 1971 for all types of permits issued by this Division amounted to \$73,765.92.

The total fees collected during the year July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971, amounted to \$54,219.86. During the fiscal year this Department processed 1703 building and zoning violations, including South Providence and East Side Renewal Project Areas. The Field Inspection Section of the Division conducted 17,835 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 \$11,733,300.00 or more:

Providence Civic Center Authority Sabin St. New Civic Center	\$7,542,000
Regency Joint Venture 210 Fountain St. New Apt. House - 120 Units	1,220,300
American Can Co. 125 Dupont Drive Addition to Printing Shop	410,000
Vargas Mfg. Co. 150 Niantic Ave. New Addition (Jewelry Mfg.)	300,000
R. I. Hospital 593 Eddy St. Addition - Hematology Laboratory	273,000
Lynn Ann Nursing Home 292 Elmwood Ave. New Nursing Home (Addition)	200,000
R. I. Hospital Trust 15 Westminster St. Addition to Restaurant (12th Floor)	200,000
Crisloid Plastic 55 Porter St. Addition to Mfg. Bldg.	175,000
McLaughlin & Moran 103 Terminal Road Addition to Warehouse	140,000
General Electric Co. 586 Atwells Ave. Addition to Mfg. Bldg.	126,000

Alfred P. Ardente 201-231 Mt. Pleasant Ave. (2) New Apt. Houses - 18 Units Per Bldg.	126,000 126,000
A. Saugy Co. 44 Cross St. New Meat Packing Bldg.	110,000
Sarah F. Logan 190 Wayland Ave. New Store	100,000
Industrial National Bank 661 Broadway New Branch Bank	100,000
What Cheer Realty 491 Silver Spring St. Addition to Bldg. - Warehouse (Beer)	90,000
Elmgrove Realty Co. 8 Elmgrove Ave. New Apt. House - 12 Units	80,000
W. W. Grainger Inc. 185 Toronto Ave. New Warehouse	70,000
Mr. & Mrs. L. Gates 200 Lorimer Ave. New One Family Dwelling	70,000
P.B.H. Corp. 154 Narragansett Ave. Addition to Warehouse	65,000
Miriam Hospital 164 Summit Ave. Interior Alterations	60,000
M.N. Cartier & Sons 1025 Smith St. Alteration - New Branch Bank	50,000
H & M Realty Co. 99 Hartford Ave. Addition to Mfg. Bldg.	50,000
Congen Properties 1 Weybosset St. Alterations - Office Bldg.	50,000

The declared estimated cost of construction of the 24 buildings and structures listed on the previous pages is \$11,733,300.00 - or 73% of the total estimated construction cost figures; while the number of permits issued for the construction of these buildings is only 24 - or less than 2.9% 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,

Nicholas DiBenedetto,  
Chief Inspector of  
Structures and Zoning

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.

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.

The processing of complaints is another important function requiring inspectional services. During the past year, more than 17,835 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 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 ~~one~~ hundred thirteen (113) buildings.

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, 1970 to June 30, 1971, 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 forty-nine (49) Limited Premises Permits issued and two thousand one hundred sixty-four (2,164) electrical permits for installation of electrical wiring and apparatus, including alterations and repairs, for which a total fee of \$24,058.77 was collected.

July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971

Number of rough wiring inspections	379
Number of defective installations re-inspected	1085
Number of certificates of approval issued	1526
Number of inspections after fire	717
Number of investigations requested by the Narragansett Electric Company	803
Number of special investigations	1177
Minimum Housing Inspections	255
Limited Premises Inspections	49
Total number of Inspections	5991
Letters to owners	1254
Number of disconnects ordered	368
Sign locations cleared	181
Sign locations non-illuminated cleared	32
Sign locations illuminated	149
Estimated value fee	\$4,318,912.00

## REPORT

Due to the death of our second Electrical Inspector, Edward Lacouture, our inspection force was reduced from four to three inspectors, which doubled the workload of the remaining inspectors. We were able to cope with the workload due to the cutback caused by the slowdown in the building trades.

We still have three Grade I Inspectors positions that we have been unable to fill. 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. The City Fire Department Lieutenant's Training School.
2. The State Seminar on Minimum Housing Codes.
3. State Building Code Study Commission.

We lectured on the safe use of electricity, pointing out inspection and investigation procedures that should be used.

This year the workload has increased due to the new buildings at Huntington Industrial Park, Downtown Providence, and hospitals located in Providence.

Rhode Island Hospital has a new Ambulatory Patient Center which is in full progress.

Huntington Industrial Park has four (4) buildings with addition and alterations to the Electrical systems.

Downtown Providence has several large buildings in progress:  
23-story building (40 Westminster Street); Cathedral of St. Peters  
and Paul; Rhode Island Hospital Trust Tower; Weybosset Hill  
Parcel 15B; Regency East and Connecticut General—with plans  
reviewed for three Turnkey buildings and two Town House Projects.

Last but not least is the New Providence Civic Center that has  
been very demanding of our time.

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, 1970 to June 30, 1971.

Plumbing Inspections	3683	
Drain Inspections	640	
Miscellaneous Visits	159	
Minimum Housing Visits	<u>1263</u>	Total 5,745
Plumbing Plans Filed	1225	
Drain Plans Filed	<u>269</u>	Total 1,494
Work on Old Buildings	1214	
Work on New Buildings	<u>90</u>	Total 1,304
Sewer Connections	1494	
Cesspool Connections	<u>0</u>	Total 1,494
Final Inspections	1254	
Estimated Cost of Plumbing Plans		\$1,286,927
Estimated Cost of Drain Plans		<u>150,115</u>
	Total	\$1,437,042
Fees for Limited Sprinkler License Issued		\$125.00
Fees for Limited Drain Layers License Issued		<u>225.00</u>
	Total	\$350.00
Fees for Plumbing & Drainage Permits and Limited Licenses		\$14,155.50

## REPORT

During the past year, one of the most perplexing problems confronting this Department has been the question of accepting new materials and allowing their use in plumbing systems. The acceptance of plastic pipe and fittings by the Building Code Revision Committee has been the single most important challenge we have had to face.

Local building codes frequently restrict the selection of new products and materials. This also accounts for some of the time lag in the adoption of these products as recommended standards conforming to revised building codes.

To gain a cross-section of opinion in various engineering disciplines, consultants were queried as to their experience in meeting this problem.

One suggested that before consideration of a new product or material, even though it may have distinct advantages over other products, the engineer should determine whether local service and parts are available, reliability of distributor, and experience and integrity of the manufacturer. He also emphasized the importance of discussing merits of the product with the architect and the owner.

Another points out that the delay in acceptance of new products and materials in many areas often can be attributed to local building code authorities who must first approve their use.

Still another, reporting on his experience said, "If a new product is introduced to us which is based on sound engineering principles, preferably those which have been applied in other fields to produce similar results, we have a starting point for consideration of the product." Too many times new equipment simply consists of old equipment which has been cheapened and the manufacturer represents this cutting of quality as progress. If the departure from his previous design or from previously accepted standard designs simply consists of a cost reduction, we would seriously question the applicability as long as the previously available product is still on the market.

It can be seen from the foregoing that we were required to do a great deal of research and study where plastics were concerned.

The past year has also seen a great deal of excitement in the area of ecology, especially where it concerns the purification of our streams and rivers. I take great pride in our Plumbing Code and its enforcement where discharge of deleterious materials into our sewerage system is concerned. The only cases of deleterious material being discharged into our rivers and/or streams, uncovered by investigating bodies was where the piping of said material was done illegally.

Our code provides for the proper handling and treatment of deleterious material before it enters the sewerage systems.

Respectfully submitted,

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

DIVISION OF MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATIONS

Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director  
Department of Building Inspection

Dear Mr. DiMase:

This is the Annual Report of the Mechanical Division for the year July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971.

During the past year there was recorded an increase in the number of inspections and progress inspections made by the men in this Division.

The Chief and members of his staff are always readily available to contractors, engineers and architects to discuss the suitability and proper operation of mechanical equipment to insure the safety of the people of Providence.

In spite of a heavy work load, the inspection of all phases of mechanical equipment was adequately and completely maintained. This included the inspection of elevators, conveyors, sprinklers, heating equipment, air conditioning, ventilation and refrigeration equipment.

The Chief and his staff witnessed many tests following the completion of installations to determine that violations of the Building Code regulations pertaining to safety were not violated.

During the past year our inspectors found a total of 205 violations regarding faulty material plus failure to apply for a permit to install equipment, as required by the Building Ordinance of the City of Providence.

Co-operation was given to the Division of Fire Prevention on numerous investigations where our inspectors were involved in detecting faulty equipment or where a fire or explosion had occurred.

The Chief and staff of Mechanical Equipment and Installations gratefully acknowledge the splendid unfailing support and advice of Honorable Joseph A. Doorley, Jr., Mayor of Providence, and Vincent DiMase, Director of the Department of Building Inspection.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph F. Kane, Chief Inspector  
Mechanical Equipment  
and Installations

The following is an accounting of the Division of Mechanical Equipment and Installations from July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971. The estimated valuation of such equipment is \$8,830,553.07 for which the following revenue in fee charges was collected:

REVENUE

Oil Burners	1,185.50	
Gas Burners	2,349.50	
Boilers	2,072.65	
Gas Water Heaters	200.25	
Oil Fired Water Heaters	48.00	
Furnaces	775.35	
Ductwork	968.00	
Air Conditioners	953.95	
Radiation	335.75	
Tank	695.50	
Ventilation	144.80	
Sprinklers	964.39	
Refrigeration	102.00	
Elevators	1,439.40	
Console Heaters	40.75	
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	154.90	
Unit Heaters	289.95	
Miscellaneous	<u>9,989.40</u>	
	\$22,710.04	\$22,710.04
New Licenses:		
Boiler Operator	329.00	
Operating Engineer	231.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	14.00	
Apprentice Fireman	55.00	
License Renewals:		
Boiler Operator	2,492.00	
Operating Engineer	2,828.00	
Refrigerating Machine Operator	<u>120.00</u>	
	\$6,069.00	\$ 6,069.00
Grand Total		<u>\$28,779.04</u>

There were 893 permits issued for 1,355 units from  
July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971:

<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	<u>UNITS</u>
Oil Burners	135
Gas Burners	348
Boilers	175
Gas Water Heaters	31
Oil Water Heaters	4
Furnaces	91
Ductwork	98
Air Conditioners	43
Radiation	47
Tank	93
Ventilation	6
Sprinklers	20
Refrigeration	3
Elevators	24
Console Heaters	14
Hoods & Exhaust	12
Generator	2
Unit Heaters	41
Miscellaneous	<u>168</u>
	1,355

There were 4,864 locations visited and 10,802 inspections and investigations made.

INSPECTIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Complaints	318
Violations (Illegal & Incorrect installation of equipment)	205
Oil Burners	135
Gas Burners	348
Boilers	175
Gas Water Heaters	31
Oil Fired Water Heaters	4
Furnaces	91
Ductwork	98
Air Conditioning	43
Radiation	47
Tanks	93
Ventilation	6
Sprinklers	20
Refrigeration	3
Elevators	24
Console Heaters	14
Hoods & Exhaust Systems	12
Generators	2
Unit Heaters	41
Miscellaneous	168
Investigations	2,124
Progress Inspections	<u>6,800</u>
Total	10,802

In addition to the above mentioned inspections and investigations:

Elevator Tests	23
Sprinkler Tests	10
Generator Tests	2

## 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 \$125,195.38 in fees for the entire Department for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971.

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

REVENUE SUMMARY

To: Mr. Vincent DiMase, Director

Subject: Fees collected by all Divisions of the  
Department of Building Inspection in  
the City of Providence, Rhode Island—  
and the same deposited at the City  
Collector's Office for the Fiscal Year  
July 1, 1970 to June 30, 1971, inclusively.

Total Collections and Deposits \$125,195.38

Total Collected by Inter-Office Divisions:

Structures & Zoning Division	\$ 54,219.76
Electrical Division	24,058.77
Mechanical Division	28,779.04
Plumbing & Drainage Division	15,222.81
Zoning Board	2,300.00
Building Board	595.00
Housing Board	20.00
	<hr/>
	\$125,195.38

Respectfully submitted,

Marie D'Elena

## DIVISION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

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 1970-1971, the Division of Code Enforcement referred to the Department of Building Inspection 2,430 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 inspection activities of the Department of Building Inspection is evidenced in the greatly improved appearance of the areas which have been inspected. The Inspection 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.

## 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.

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 of Providence as well as two East Side houses have been designated national historic landmarks, the Department of the Interior announced. The new landmarks were named by Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton. The houses include the Thomas P. Ives House, 66 Power Street, and the Corliss-Carrington House, 66 Williams Street.

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 so doing 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 475 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.

All abandoned cars were moved under the direction of George F. Thomas, Inspector from the Department of Building Inspection.

Equipment and labor used was from the Highway Department of Public Works. We are very grateful for the splendid cooperation from Lawrence P. McGarry, Director of the Department of Public Works.

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 performs the Engineering Research for the Department. The provisions of the Building Code are not intended to prevent the use of any material or of any method of construction not specifically mentioned; however, such alternate must be shown to afford Code equivalence. The rapidly expanding lines of new materials and methods of construction are studied and evaluated for Code equivalency by the Director. New materials, standards, and techniques may then be incorporated into proposed architectural designs. Some current approvals include new types of fire-proofing material, fire retardant lumber, special wall construction, structural framing systems, and connections. The Director has also allowed the use of computer solutions in structural engineering. To do this, however, has required that the Director remain knowledgeable of current practices and developments in the computer field.

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.

During October 5-9, 1970, the Director attended the University of Massachusetts, "Municipal Building Officials Conference". He was on the Institute Staff and presided at

several meetings. He presented a paper on "Building Regulations Problem Clinic". Professor Harold B. Gatslick from the University of Massachusetts informed Mayor Doorley of the Director's participation at the Institute and requested Mayor Doorley to award the Certificate of Completion to the Director with appropriate ceremony.

On November 19, 1970, the Director spoke before the Board of Selectmen of Mansfield, Massachusetts to explain the BOCA Basic Code, and how they could adopt it for their town.

On December 1, 1970 the Director spoke before the "R.I. State Building Code Commission" on the BOCA Basic Codes and Standards.

On December 15, 1970 the Director spoke before the City Council of Woonsocket, R. I., to explain the BOCA Basic Code, and how they could adopt it for their town.

On January 7-11, 1970 the Director attended the Mid-Year Meetings of the Building Officials and Code Administrators, International, Inc., in Houston, Texas. The Director participated in the proposed code changes and also attended the "Central Cities Council" meeting, which discussed "Uniform code enforcement for large cities". There was considerable discussion of current problems, such as "Business Schools" in office buildings, and new programs of the large cities. There was a great deal of exchange of information which was beneficial to all.

On February 15, 1971 the Director spoke before the Board of Selectmen in Norton, Massachusetts to explain the BOCA Basic Code, and how they could adopt it for their town.

On February 17-19, 1970 the Director attended the "Eastern States Building Officials Federation School", in New York City. The Director spoke on Code Principles, Enforcement methods, Legal Basis for Code Administration and Design for Life and Fire Safety.

On March 22, 1970 the Director spoke before the Town Council of Foster, R.I., to explain the BOCA Basic Code, and how they could adopt it for their town.

On March 26, 1971 the Director spoke on WJAR - "Talk Back", open line, pertaining to "vacant" and "abandoned structures".

On April 27, 1971, appeared before the R. I. Senate Committee on Corporations to testify on the proposed bill pertaining to a "State Building Code".

On April 29, 1971, went to Jeanette, Pennsylvania to inspect an 8-story apartment house building being built under HUD supervision and using the "Bison Wall Frame" system.

During May 2-8, 1971 the Director was chairman of "Cleanup Week" in Providence.

On May 24, 1971, spoke before the Town Council of Tiverton, R. I., on adoption of the BOCA Basic Code.

From June 12 to 19, 1971 the Director attended the 56th Annual Conference of the Building Officials and Code Administrators International in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The Director was Moderator on a panel pertaining to the "Housing Problem" in the United States. The Director also presided at a meeting of "Large Cities Council" where common problems pertaining to large cities were discussed and information as to their solutions was exchanged. The Director was named by the President to write the Resolutions for the Committee who arranged the Conference and for the BOCA members who passed away during the year. The Director as 1st Vice President of BOCA, presided at several sessions and took part in the discussions of proposed Code Changes.

On Thursday, June 17, 1971 the Director was elected President of the Building Officials and Code Administrators, International. At the annual banquet in the evening the Director was installed as President of BOCA International by Mr. Ted Duke from Billings, Montana.

The Director was also honored by Governor Louie B. Nunn of Kentucky who Commissioned Mr. DiMase a "Kentucky Colonel".

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.

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

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

## C O N C L U S I O N

The Department of Building Inspection has a good Building Code to enforce and is free from pressures in its application. This makes for good government. A building code is not merely a book but a document....contributing within the community a physical structural growth where people may proudly and usefully live, work, play, educate and worship in structures of beauty, safety and good health.

Universally building regulations are recognized as a documented Code. Why is it called a Code? Why not a manual; or a handbook; or a reference book; or a standards book; or even a digest? The definition of "Code" is a "System of Principles". A simple four word statement, but very profound in meaning. The modern building code of today is truly "a system of principles" when we realize that it is a code of building ethics, a code of conduct, a code of administration, a code of human rights and appeals, a code of protective rights of property and a code of performance.

The public need for good codes is recognized and supported by the citizens. The community recognizes the need for a good code in order to upgrade its property use and occupancy standards. In other words, the community cares enough to see to it that something is being done to improve the general well-being.

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.

Enforcement of damaged and abandoned buildings that menace health and safety was given added impetus by the Director. The City demolished 113 buildings and placed a lien on the property as prescribed by law. There were 233 buildings demolished by owners, making a total of 346 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.

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 adequate well qualified administration is provided. The administrative staff should be carefully selected and well organized to serve the public effectively and efficiently.

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.

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.

Respectfully submitted,

*Vincent DiMase*

Vincent DiMase, P.E.  
Director