Inspectional Services Department

Mission

To keep the record for all real property in the City, so that residents, developers, contractors, property owners, attorneys, architects, engineers, and researchers can access the property records of the City on-line and at our windows.

We also act as the portal for all new businesses in the City. When someone decides to pursue a new venture in Newton, they are encouraged to visit ISD to get a complete read on whether their idea, in a proposed location, is allowed, if it conforms to zoning code regulations and what is their best path forward.

Newton ISD is and has been an incredibly busy place issuing +/- 10,000 permits annually. ISD issues building, mechanical, plumbing, gas, and electrical permits for all manner of work to be done in the City. ISD is open for 50 hours per week to serve the public, opening at 7:00AM. ISD is staffed by Development Service Assistants, Administrative personnel, inspectors, and managers who all provide service and answer questions concerning building and zoning in Newton.

ISD has many functions, including periodic inspections, code enforcement, and inspections for building, plumbing, gas, and electrical. Additionally, ISD supervises the enforcement of the leaf blower ordinance and the operation of the Weights and Measures Inspector. Overall ISD performs many thousands of inspections per year. ISD also responds to various other complaints, involving fence and sign regulations, illegal units and parking, overcrowding, work without permits, abandoned buildings, noise, and vibration complaints.

Periodic inspections help ensure that all schools, camps, day care centers, restaurants, places of assembly, and multi-unit housing are safe and code compliant. We complete 800+ inspections annually and then are periodically inspected as necessary.

The Code Enforcement Officer responds to complaints of zoning and building code violations as well as concerns about Special Permit conditions, historic and conservation issues, work hours and noise violations.

ISD has multiple interdepartmental interactions daily. We are grateful for the cooperation and collaboration of so many other departments, including Engineering, Fire, City Clerk, Law, Planning, Public Works, Health, Assessing, Treasury, and IT. Staff from all these areas are vital to the daily functioning of ISD. We are increasingly effective and efficient with the use of the NewGov software as we pursue the consolidation of all property information in the City as well as making all property records and files accessible and transparent for everyone working, living, or moving to the City of Newton.

FY 2024 was an exciting year with many new beginnings. ISD started with the retirement of Commissioner John Lojek after 18 years of service. I, Anthony Ciccariello, on July 1, 2023, promotion accepted the from Deputy Commissioner/Plans Examiner to the role of Commissioner of Inspectional Services Department. On January 1, 2024, Andy Mavrelis accepted the promotion Deputy Commissioner/Plans Examiner from Zoning Enforcement Agent.

NewGov:

- Service and counter service at ISD has changed, becoming more accessible, round the clock, efficient, effective and customer friendly due to the introduction of the on-line permitting system, NewGov.
- Building applications have been broken into specific steps (for example, roofing & siding, windows & doors) thereby streamlining the review and permit turnaround and easing the process for owners and contractors, as they no longer have to fill out information unnecessary for their project.
- New reports have been created for leaf blower registrations, leaf blower violations and monthly building permits issued. These reports are available online at newtonma.gov/inspectional-services, and more reports are being created.
- Deb Finamore continues working with City departments to bring their applications online and into NewGov. She is also looking into setting up "Projects" in NewGov so that during the application process the applicant will be made aware of other departments that require a permit as well.
- Development Services Assistants (DSAs) are working with Code Enforcement on requests and letters. DSAs are also assisting with processing Leaf Blower registrations, violation payments and mailings to contractors.

Code Enforcement:

- Requests for enforcement continue to come in via the on-line portal and we work hard to respond quickly.
- Building inspectors are assisting with the process for investigating requests for building code and zoning enforcement while we hire a new Code Enforcement Agent
- Leaf Blower violations are continuing to be entered into NewGov and paid via the portal, by mail or in person.

School Safety:

- A goal for FY2025 is to re-establish the Task Force for School Safety now that we are post covid.
- Periodic Inspections are utilizing the NewGov system and renewal process to ensure requirements are met.

Inspectors:

- Inspectors review applications via the NewGov portal and communicate with the applicants through the system. This makes the process easier throughout the day, and allows another person is able to pick up where they left off to keep the inspection process moving along.
- Inspectors are reviewing open permits and scheduling inspections multiple permits at a time to help close older permits.

Property Files:

• Because of the implementation of NewGov, DSA staff now have more time to focus on other issues in the office, prioritizing scanning property files so more past information is easily accessible online. As of February, we have completed all addresses through the letter G. Anyone can log into the portal and view property files for streets A-G.

Weights & Measures:

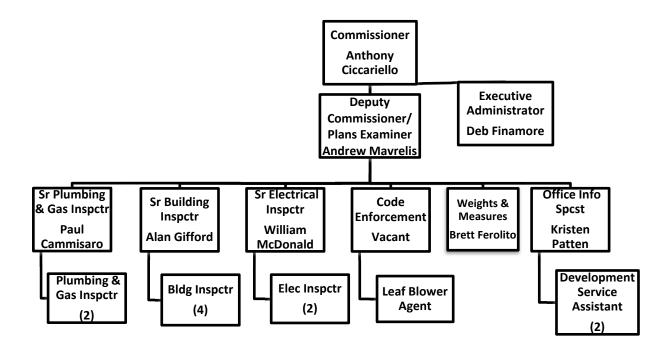
- Continue to check devices that weigh and measure, such as scales and gas pumps on a yearly basis.
- Explore moving from paper forms to the NewGov system.

ISD continues to be dedicated to efficiency and effectiveness, customer service and responsiveness, and the advancement of all our employees, including advanced certifications and educational opportunities.

Anthony Ciccariello, Commissioner

Anthony Ciccariello

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES



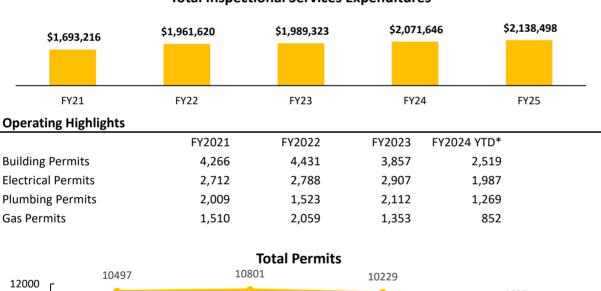
Financial and Operating Highlights

Financial Highlights

		<	 Actual	 >	Original	Proposed
		FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Expenditure by Depar	tment					
Admin	\$	576,075	\$ 675,551	\$ 724,550	\$ 762,846	\$ 757,084
Bldg Code Enf.	\$	473,957	\$ 559,678	\$ 538,353	\$ 557,449	\$ 573,990
Weights & Measures	\$	98,592	\$ 75,512	\$ 87,211	\$ 97,267	\$ 104,177
Mech Inspections	\$	544,593	\$ 650,879	\$ 639,209	\$ 654,084	\$ 703,247
Total	\$	1,693,216	\$ 1,961,620	\$ 1,989,323	\$ 2,071,646	\$ 2,138,498
% Incr			15.85%	1.41%	4.14%	3.23%
Personnel						
Full-Time Employees		19	19	19	18*	18*
Part-Time Employees		0	1	1	1	1
Total		19	20	20	19	19

^{*}Deferred Development Services Associate for FY24/FY25

Total Inspectional Services Expenditures





*FY2024 is as of February 29, 2024

Enforcement Requests (July 2023-February 2024)

New	Open	Closed	Closed 30 days
204	185	135	45

FY 2024 Building Permit Breakdowns to Date

Residential Constructic	73	Commercial (new)	0
Demolition	70	Solar	157

Inspectional Services Department Fiscal Year 2025 Outcomes and Strategies

There has been a change in the way ISD provides service to our customers. There have been many adjustments to everyday work within and outside of the office streamlining new permits for better reporting and designation. It is still true that long before Newton City Hall is open to the public, ISD is

Outcome 1

Provide 1st Class Customer Service

already at work. ISD opens for business at 7:00 a.m., Monday through Friday and remains open for 50 hours a week to serve the residents of Newton. NewGov has cut down applicants needing to visit ISD in person to request permits. As a result, we are now able to give more attention to the property owners, brokers, lawyers, and contractors who visit the counter with questions about a property such as what can be built there, what are the zoning requirements, and how to close open permits. At present all building, plumbing, gas, and electric permits are being applied for on-line in NewGov. This permitting software allows clients to avoid visiting City Hall and they are issued permits electronically. Problems or issues with their application are resolved by commenting through email and the system. Customers, therefore, can apply, pay, and search for properties 24/7/365.

We have far fewer ISD counter conversations and the nature of the ones we do have are more substantive, generally concerning resident's property, contractor's questions, the review of "what ifs," and reviews of property folders. While ISD assists property owners with closing open permits, we are trying to educate everyone that it is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure all inspections have been completed and passed before accepting final payment from the property owner. We understand that property owners want to find out how to close old open permits, as they have been told by their finance company or realtor that selling their property depends on closing open permits, often from many years ago. ISD has made a conscientious effort to aid these people in getting older permits closed so they can sell or refinance their property. Inspectors proactively are doing additional inspections while at a site to help close old permits.

As Zoning code, building code and energy codes continue to evolve, ISD provides a lot of education and explanations. Changes to the retail and building environment also leads to many questions as to new uses, many of which are not provided for in the current code.

ISD staff works hard to stay up to date and well trained on the nuances of the Building and Zoning Code and the current interpretations. We set aside every Thursday from 2 p.m. until 3 p.m. for staff training and meetings.

Outcome 2

Provide regular and effective Code Enforcement and School Safety & Periodic Inspections Code enforcement, periodic inspections and school safety inspections are important, nuanced parts of the ISD responsibilities. ISD enforces the provisions of the 780 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), the State Building Code, the City of Newton Zoning Code, and multiple City Ordinances. "Strict code enforcement makes the city safer" is a

Inspectional Services Department Fiscal Year 2025 Outcomes and Strategies

longstanding motto of Newton ISD. All the codes that ISD is responsible for enforcing lead to a safer and more livable Newton.

The Periodic Inspection program includes all the properties and buildings in the city that involve a public assembly component. Restaurants, theaters, licensed establishments, churches, synagogues, private schools, daycares, meeting halls, and more are all inspected under this program. ISD devotes a full-time inspector to just this program as it involves approximately 825 separate inspections plus follow-up inspections over the course of the year. This program is now fully recorded and tracked in the NewGov system for up-to-date current and future access.

The School Safety Task Force will be starting up again post COVID. We will use NewGov to automatically notify applicants, and guests of the users, of upcoming filings and inspections. NewGov sends out 4 email notifications to the applicants over the course of the filing season. The applicant is required to check the information previously provided about their location and to schedule an inspection with the Periodic Inspector.

We have promoted our Zoning and Code Enforcement Agent, Andy Mavrelis, to Deputy Commissioner/Plans Examiner. We are actively searching for a new Zoning and Code Enforcement Agent. While the position is vacant, our district inspectors are helping to investigate complaints, do inspections, take measurements and follow-up.

ISD has made significant progress efficiently following up on complaints and violations. Code violations are now integrated into the NewGov system. With active attention to code violations, many, if not most, violators choose to comply rather than be fined or go to court.

While the leaf blower noise law is inherently challenging to enforce, we have seen a significant improvement in behavior over the course of the last few years. Leaf Blower registrations are available via NewGov for the landscapers/landscaper company to apply. We are continuing to prepare reports on a weekly basis from NewGov showing the Landscapers/Companies that have registered. We will also be preparing weekly reports for all Landscaper/Company's in compliance or in violation of the ordinance and put that on the City's Website (newtonma.gov – Inspectional Services). Tens of thousands of dollars in fines were issued in 2023 and we will continue in 2024 to actively pursue violators.

ISD also manages the City Weights and Measures Department as well. In the past year, we have transitioned from a long-term employee to a new inspector. This has been a very smooth transition, and we are in very good shape and well positioned for the future.

In November 2021 NewGov went live with a few departments utilizing the system. NewGov has continued to expand with Inspectional Services, Health and Human Services, Planning and Development, Engineering, Fire, Parks, Recreation & Culture, and the City Clerk Departments all taking advantage of this powerful system. We are continuing to work with Cultural Affairs, the City

Outcome 3

Expand the Permitting and Information Management System, NewGov

Inspectional Services Department Fiscal Year 2025 Outcomes and Strategies

Clerk and the Mayor's Office, integrating even more processes into the system, thus saving time, improving speed, and providing transparency.

We are also increasingly focusing on the powerful tools within NewGov for reporting. We will increasingly be taking advantage of modules for frequently requested information, creating reports, and giving the public more information at their fingertips. We will all be able to see time periods, addresses, costs, permit fees and more.

ISD is actively working daily on scanning older, paper property files into NewGov. As of March, we have finished scanning through letter G. In other words, property records located on all streets in Newton starting with letters A through G will be available online and the public does not need to come to City Hall to review anything that ISD had in its property file. We are also going to be adding a new record type for old mechanical permits that were scanned but are not available online currently. This project for mechanical permit scanning should be completed during the upcoming budget.

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND

DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENT LEGAL LEVEL OF CONTROL

_	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ORIGINAL 2024	RECOMMENDED 2025	CHANGE 2024 to 2025
INSPECTIONAL SERVICES SUMMARY						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	1,408,681	1,684,528	1,678,466	1,724,138	1,730,545	6,407
52 - EXPENSES	27,009	42,653	36,639	49,800	55,800	6,000
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	231,842	234,441	274,217	297,708	352,153	54,445
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	1,667,532	1,961,621	1,989,323	2,071,646	2,138,498	66,852
INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	464,073	557,879	594,068	613,875	600,864	-13,011
52 - EXPENSES	23,775	32,809	27,727	36,800	42,800	6,000
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	77,174	84,863	102,755	112,171	113,420	1,249
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	565,022	675,551	724,550	762,846	757,084	-5,762
BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	396,841	487,122	464,531	477,908	483,842	5,934
52 - EXPENSES	580	1,990	1,336	3,050	3,050	0
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	74,036	70,567	72,487	76,491	87,098	10,607
TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	471,457	559,678	538,353	557,449	573,990	16,541
WEIGHTS & MEASURES						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	81,006	71,496	67,882	69,637	71,997	2,360
52 - EXPENSES	1,490	2,934	1,238	3,250	3,250	0
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	6,963	1,082	18,091	24,380	28,930	4,550
TOTAL WEIGHTS & MEASURES	89,460	75,512	87,211	97,267	104,177	6,910
MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	466,760	568,031	551,986	562,718	573,842	11,124
52 - EXPENSES	1,164	4,919	6,338	6,700	6,700	0
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	73,668	77,928	80,885	84,666	122,705	38,039
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS	541,593	650,879	639,209	654,084	703,247	49,163

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND

DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

	_	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ORIGINAL 2024	RECOMMENDED 2025	CHANGE 2024 to 2025
220 - INSPECTIO	NAL SERVICES						
0122040 - INSP	ECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
PERSONNEL	SERVICES						
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	448,982	498,588	533,181	554,075	541,564	-12,511
511101	PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	0	0	0	30,000	30,000	0
512001	SEASONAL WAGES	0	10,720	28,920	0	0	0
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	10,274	44,921	26,166	25,000	25,000	0
514001	LONGEVITY	3,317	2,650	3,800	3,300	2,800	-500
515005	BONUSES	0	0	500	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	11,053	0	0	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	1,500	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	0
TOTAL	PERSONNEL SERVICES	475,126	557,879	594,068	613,875	600,864	-13,011
EXPENSES							
524010	OFFICE EQUIPMENT R-M	0	200	0	200	200	0
524030	MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	100	141	1,335	0	5,000	5,000
527400	RENTAL - EQUIPMENT	2,297	3,594	2,899	7,000	7,000	0
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	0	40	725	0	0	0
534010	TELEPHONE	1,126	1,043	916	1,100	1,100	0
534020	CELLULAR TELEPHONES	12,694	14,290	13,808	15,500	15,500	0
534100	POSTAGE	1,023	1,134	2,220	1,500	1,500	0
534200	PRINTING	2,072	3,997	2,208	1,500	2,500	1,000
542000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	2,974	4,753	3,471	3,500	3,500	0
548400	VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	979	1,808	0	2,500	2,500	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	0	500	0	500	500	0
558500	COMPUTER SUPPLIES	0	727	0	2,500	2,500	0
559200	BOOKS/MANUALS/PERIODI	0	0	0	500	500	0
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	0	0	53	0	0	0
571100	IN-STATE CONFERENCES		332	0	0	0	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	510	250	93	500	500	0
TOTAL	EXPENSES	23,775	32,809	27,727	36,800	42,800	6,000
FRINGE BEN	EFITS						
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	1,664	1,670	1,794	1,888	1,313	-575
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	60,610	68,555	84,595	89,391	86,361	-3,030
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	123	71	109	118	114	-4
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	6,468	7,478	7,621	8,570	8,386	-184
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	8,309	7,089	8,637	12,204	17,246	5,042
TOTAL	FRINGE BENEFITS	77,174	84,863	102,755	112,171	113,420	1,249
TOTAL INSI	PECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	576,075	675,551	724,550	762,846	757,084	-5,762

	=	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ORIGINAL 2024	RECOMMENDED 2025	CHANGE 2024 to 2025
0122041 - BLD	G CODE/ZONING ENFMT						
PERSONNEL	SERVICES						
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	389,819	472,694	452,079	466,408	470,842	4,434
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	317	353	1,324	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	3,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,500	500
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	3,206	6,575	3,628	4,000	5,000	1,000
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	2,500	0	0	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	0
TOTAL	PERSONNEL SERVICES	399,341	487,122	464,531	477,908	483,842	5,934
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	0	150	515	1,250	1,250	0
542000	OFFICE SUPPLIES		0	41	0	0	0
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	615	0	750	750	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	580	1,000	555	600	600	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	0	225	225	250	250	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	0	0	0	200	200	0
TOTAL	EXPENSES	580	1,990	1,336	3,050	3,050	0
FRINGE BEN	EFITS						
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	1,624	1,406	1,406	1,467	1,411	-56
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	61,702	56,500	58,308	61,345	71,857	10,512
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	5,458	6,745	6,404	6,898	6,950	52
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	5,252	5,916	6,369	6,781	6,880	99
TOTAL	FRINGE BENEFITS	74,036	70,567	72,487	76,491	87,098	10,607
TOTAL BLI	OG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	473,957	559,678	538,353	557,449	573,990	16,541

	=	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ORIGINAL 2024	RECOMMENDED 2025	CHANGE 2024 to 2025
0122044 - WEI	GHTS & MEASURES						
PERSONNEL	SERVICES						
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	81,006	71,496	67,882	69,637	71,997	2,360
514001	LONGEVITY	1,333	0	0	0	0	0
514308	SPECIALIST PAY	481	0	0	0	0	0
514399	ADMIN SUPPORT STIPEND	1,250	0	0	0	0	0
515003	SPECIAL LEAVE BUY BACK	6,000	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	PERSONNEL SERVICES	90,070	71,496	67,882	69,637	71,997	2,360
EXPENSES							
524030	MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	68	0	0	0	0	0
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	0	0	0	100	100	0
534010	TELEPHONE	49	42	40	100	100	0
542000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	0	162	0	250	250	0
543200	SMALL TOOLS	911	1,710	319	0	0	0
548000	GASOLINE	501	766	639	900	900	0
548200	TIRES & TIRE SUPPLIES	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	0
548400	VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	29	0	78	0	0	0
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	254	162	300	300	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	0	0	0	300	300	0
571100	IN-STATE CONFERENCES	0	0	0	100	100	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	0	0	0	200	200	0
TOTAL	EXPENSES	1,558	2,934	1,238	3,250	3,250	0
FRINGE BEN	EFITS						
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	144	0	453	523	503	-20
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	5,480	0	16,713	20,163	24,626	4,463
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	61	52	57	59	57	-2
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,278	1,030	867	1,014	1,044	30
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	0	0	0	2,621	2,700	79
TOTAL	FRINGE BENEFITS	6,963	1,082	18,091	24,380	28,930	4,550
TOTAL WE	IGHTS & MEASURES	98,592	75,512	87,211	97,267	104,177	6,910

		ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ORIGINAL 2024	RECOMMENDED 2025	CHANGE 2024 to 2025
	=	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 to 2025
0122049 - MEC	HANICAL INSPECTIONS						
PERSONNEL	SERVICES						
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	457,863	555,807	536,495	555,318	562,442	7,124
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	1,616	4,368	2,952	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	4,000	3,000	4,000	4,400	4,400	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	3,282	1,856	5,539	0	4,000	4,000
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	3,000	0	0	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	0
TOTAL	PERSONNEL SERVICES	469,760	568,031	551,986	562,718	573,842	11,124
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	150	2,085	3,184	3,000	3,000	0
543200	SMALL TOOLS	44	803	0	900	900	0
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	0	0	500	500	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	525	1,137	1,060	1,300	1,300	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	445	295	1,695	500	500	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	0	599	399	500	500	0
TOTAL	EXPENSES	1,164	4,919	6,338	6,700	6,700	0
FRINGE BEN	EFITS						
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	1,548	1,504	1,504	1,570	1,509	-61
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	59,754	62,144	64,629	67,473	102,023	34,550
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	113	104	114	118	114	-4
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	6,390	7,785	7,535	8,190	8,283	93
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	5,863	6,392	7,104	7,315	10,776	3,461
TOTAL	FRINGE BENEFITS	73,668	77,928	80,885	84,666	122,705	38,039
TOTAL MEG	CHANICAL INSPECTIONS	544,593	650,879	639,209	654,084	703,247	49,163
TOTAL INSPE	CTIONAL SERVICES	1,693,216	1,961,621	1,989,323	2,071,646	2,138,498	66,852