

Inspectional Services Department

Mission

The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) is the keeper of the record for all real property in the City. Homeowners, developers, contractors, property owners, attorneys, architects, engineers and researchers are able to access the property records of the City on-line and at our windows.

ISD acts 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.

The ISD issues +/- 10,000 permits annually for building, plumbing, gas, electrical and mechanical work. The business counter at ISD is staffed 53 hours per week, opening at 7:00 AM to service the public. ISD's front counter is tended by Development Service Assistants and inspectors at all hours to provide accurate answers to building and zoning questions.

Every school, camp, day care, restaurant, places of assembly and multi-unit housing units are inspected by the Periodic Inspection program at ISD. Over 800 inspections are completed, and then followed up and re-inspected as necessary.

The Code Enforcement Officer pursues zoning and building code violations, Special Permit conditions monitoring, as well as work hour and noise violations. Violations of historic and conservation restrictions, signage, light and noise complaints also come to ISD for enforcement.

ISD inspectors perform thousands of inspections per year along with dealing with property line disputes, fence violations, accessory structures, signs, tree removal complaints, illegal parking and apartments, work without permits, abandoned building, etc.

ISD interacts daily with many other city departments in pursuit of our work. Engineering, Fire, City Clerk, Law, Planning, DPW, Health, Assessing, and IT are all vital to complete the information that must be accessed on a daily basis.

FY 2021 was a unique challenge for everyone. ISD, despite the onset of the pandemic, continued to work, on site, in City Hall throughout the year.

At the beginning of Covid-19 related limitations and closures, ISD was challenged to differentiate types of projects as either “essential” or “non-essential” and all that that implied for the citizens of Newton. Many weeks were spent dealing with work that was allowed vs. work not allowed, job site safety protocols and complaints that stemmed from perceived violations. Though City Hall was technically closed, permit applications continued to arrive through a “drop box” system in front of City Hall. Despite the pandemic, much construction work continued. ISD was challenged to come up with protocols, for continuing to work, needed to work safely. Some of them included:

- All inspectors required to wear masks at all times on the job site.
- No one could be at the job site except the permit holder for inspections.
- ISD inspectors utilized scheduling, data entry and reporting via in-field technology.
- When City Hall opened again, tables were placed in front of the customer windows and windows were only opened 6” from the bottom.
- Hand sanitizer available for all visitors.
- Masks worn at all times at the public counter.

The property record scanning project was suspended. This effort was a casualty of budget constraints brought on by the pandemic.

Code Enforcement remains a substantial challenge with the addition of accessory apartment and short-term rentals (STR) and the existing volume of complaints.

The School Safety program continues to see substantial progress toward the goal of fully

that compliant facilities. The cooperation of the School, Fire, Police, Public Buildings, Law and Health Department have achieved much progress; however, more remains to be done.

ISD continues to work with the Planning Department, the Zoning and Planning Committee and the public as we continue the zoning redesign/rewrite project.

This year we have incorporated the 2nd DSA position into ISD. The DSA position supports all business counter work, provides excellent customer service, begins the process of administrative support to both the periodic and code enforcement ends of ISD.

ISD has also acquired the position of Inspector of Weights and Measures. We will work to seamlessly incorporate this new position and requirements.

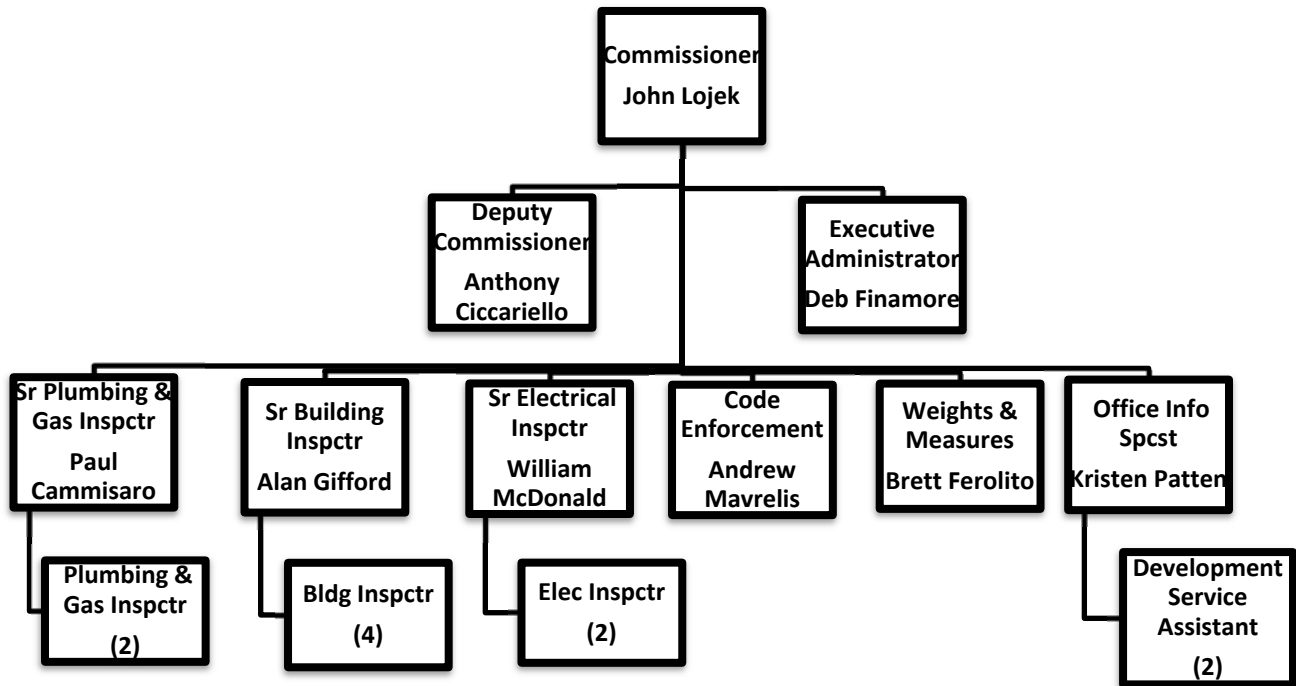
Notably, this budget allows us to bring on a seasonal leaf-blower compliance inspector for spring and fall months so that the City can proactively ensure that landscapers and homeowners are utilizing leaf blowers that conform with the City’s ordinance.

ISD remains committed to our stated goals and hope to build on our accomplishments. We believe the newly acquired permitting/municipal management system will go a long way in bringing ISD and the City as a whole to a more transparent, user-friendly position. At this time ISD is fully staffed and we look forward to providing the excellent customer service and strict code enforcement.



John D. Lojek, Commissioner

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES



Financial and Operating Highlights

Financial Highlights

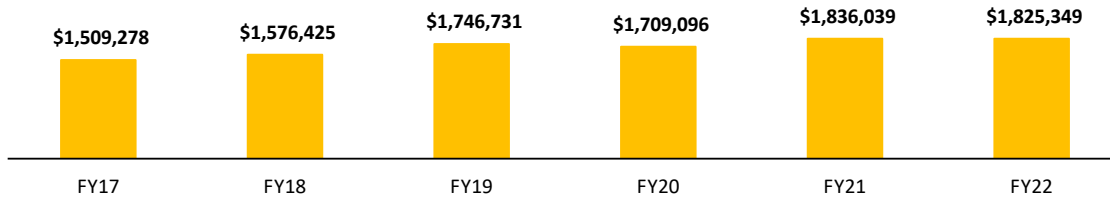
	Actual				Original	Proposed
	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Expenditure by Department						
Admin	\$ 515,097	\$ 474,428	\$ 640,658	\$ 623,323	\$ 707,073	\$ 713,262
Bldg Code Enf.	\$ 401,373	\$ 449,152	\$ 465,000	\$ 469,165	\$ 483,951	\$ 480,343
Mech Inspections	\$ 503,773	\$ 563,718	\$ 549,068	\$ 521,919	\$ 543,792	\$ 560,928
Weight & Meas	\$ 89,035	\$ 89,127	\$ 92,005	\$ 94,689	\$ 101,223	\$ 70,816
Total	\$ 1,509,278	\$ 1,576,425	\$ 1,746,731	\$ 1,709,096	\$ 1,836,039	\$ 1,825,349
% Incr		4.45%	10.80%	-2.15%	7.43%	-0.58%

*Weights & Measures moved from HHS Budget in FY2021

Personnel

Full-Time Employee	16	17	18	18	19	19
Part-Time Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	17	18	18	19	19

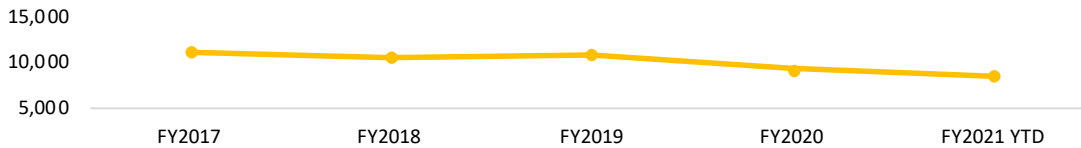
Total Inspectional Services Expenditures



Operating Highlights

	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021 YTD
Building Permits	3,971	3,721	3,968	3,533	3,465
Electrical Permits	3,204	3,169	3,017	2,537	2,245
Plumbing Permits	2,422	2,127	2,083	1,781	1,622
Gas Permits	1,635	1,625	1,754	1,481	1,279

Total Permits



	New	Open	Closed	Closed 30days
Enforcement Requests (Mar 2019-Mar 2021)	33	20	13	8

FY 2021 Building Permit Breakdowns to Date

Residential Construction (new)	98	Solar	128
Commercial (new)	2	Charging Stations	29
Demolition	91		

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2022 Outcomes and Strategies

The first priority of ISD is to provide the citizens of Newton with 1st class customer service. ISD is open over 53 hours per week to service our clients, opening at 7:00AM in order to be more accessible. ISD issues +/- 90% of permits the same day that they are submitted. The public relies upon ISD to explain property issues which they might encounter as well as making sense of the City of Newton Zoning Code and many other ordinances and codes.

A short conversation at ISD informs citizens about what they may or may not do with their own property or a prospective property. Because of recent changes to the City ordinances, many questions concerning Accessory Apartments, Short-term Rentals, garages, change of use of existing commercial spaces, dimensional controls and parking come to ISD for further explanation and clarification.

A well-trained staff is essential to deliver a consistent message to the public. Staff are regularly updated on changes to code, interpretations and legal cases. ISD has brought forward proposed ordinance changes to the Planning Department and City Council for their consideration and approval.

Outcome 1

Provide 1st Class Customer Service

The primary responsibility of ISD is to perform Code Compliance and Enforcement under both the Building Code, Zoning Code, as well as various other City Ordinances. The goal is to ensure life safety and quality of life issues.

ISD is engaged in varied activities including zoning redesign, record retention, permit issuance and customer service. However, our most important charge is life safety.

ISD is actively engaged in tracking and resolving code issues in a pro-active and amicable fashion. We can and should be judged by how well we respond to complaints. Our involvement in the School Safety program has made tremendous gains in the resolution of code and safety issues in our public schools. Interdepartmental cooperation (ISD, City Buildings, Newton Fire and Police, and Schools) has resulted in compliance with building and safety codes. All schools have Certificates of Occupancy. Annually we strive to issue renewed Certificates of Inspection.

While Newton Public School Safety is important, ISD also inspects all other schools, daycares, camps, places of assembly, restaurants, etc. in Newton so that we can assure safety in all occupancies. We have moved our periodic inspection program forward by cataloging all inspections as we look forward to the software program that will make this information more transparent.

Outcome 2

Ensure Code Enforcement, School Safety, Periodic Inspections

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2022 Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome 3

Upgrade the Permitting System with New Software

The culmination of our work with our consultant D.H. Keene Associates, Inc. and many departments, has led us to award a contract for a new city wide permitting and municipal information management system with OpenGov. OpenGov is an industry leader in online citizen portals and user

experiences. The process led to an understanding of City Departments engaged in property information and/or the approval of building permits. Engagement with OpenGov has already begun and promises to be a fruitful experience as we start to streamline, consolidate and modernize the property information and processes of the City.

ISD issues more than 10,000 permits annually for work in building, electrical, plumbing and gas as well as for fences, signs, paving and other zoning related issued that require our attention. Other City Departments issue thousands more permits and licenses which can all be issued and approved through the new system.

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENT LEGAL LEVEL OF CONTROL

	ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ORIGINAL 2021	RECOMMENDED 2022	CHANGE 2021 to 2022
INSPECTIONAL SERVICES SUMMARY						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	1,277,659	1,434,498	1,439,153	1,525,080	1,543,935	18,855
52 - EXPENSES	75,582	58,766	35,679	53,585	53,960	375
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	241,683	253,468	234,264	257,375	227,455	-29,920
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	1,594,925	1,746,731	1,709,096	1,836,039	1,825,349	-10,690
INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	352,667	500,293	512,099	573,146	593,618	20,472
52 - EXPENSES	61,390	46,731	28,605	39,425	39,800	375
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	77,551	93,634	82,620	94,502	79,844	-14,658
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	491,608	640,658	623,323	707,073	713,262	6,189
BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	387,649	400,882	398,205	399,797	407,314	7,517
52 - EXPENSES	4,269	2,340	603	4,200	3,700	-500
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	57,366	61,778	70,356	79,954	69,329	-10,625
TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	449,284	465,000	469,165	483,951	480,343	-3,608
WEIGHTS & MEASURES						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	78,862	81,170	84,172	88,376	65,446	-22,930
52 - EXPENSES	2,115	2,093	1,449	3,360	3,860	500
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	8,150	8,742	9,068	9,487	1,510	-7,977
TOTAL WEIGHTS & MEASURES	89,127	92,005	94,689	101,223	70,816	-30,407
MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	458,481	452,153	444,677	463,761	477,557	13,796
52 - EXPENSES	7,809	7,601	5,021	6,600	6,600	0
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	98,617	89,314	72,220	73,431	76,771	3,340
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS	564,906	549,068	521,919	543,792	560,928	17,136

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ORIGINAL 2021	RECOMMENDED 2022	CHANGE 2021 to 2022
220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES						
0122040 - INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	328,231	426,035	462,239	528,396	548,968	20,572
511101 PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	0	0	0	0	25,000	25,000
512001 SEASONAL WAGES	0	24,840	1,566	25,000	0	-25,000
513010 REGULAR OVERTIME	10,365	11,564	4,815	15,000	15,000	0
51301B OVERTIME/SPEC PROJEC	11,391	31,514	34,990	0	0	0
514001 LONGEVITY	900	2,150	2,250	2,750	2,650	-100
514006 EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	79	1,791	0	0	0	0
515005 BONUSES	700	900	0	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	0	0	4,739	0	0	0
515102 CLEANING ALLOWANCE	1,000	1,500	1,500	2,000	2,000	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	352,667	500,293	512,099	573,146	593,618	20,472
EXPENSES						
524010 OFFICE EQUIPMENT R-M	0	0	200	200	200	0
524030 MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	16,022	0	0	0	0	0
527400 RENTAL - EQUIPMENT	250	0	1,723	6,000	6,000	0
530400 DOCUMENT PRESERVATI	10,889	13,371	5,227	0	0	0
531900 TRAINING EXPENSES	35	0	0	0	0	0
534010 TELEPHONE	1,296	1,394	1,042	1,325	1,200	-125
534020 CELLULAR TELEPHONES	15,935	11,821	12,915	15,000	16,000	1,000
534100 POSTAGE	966	1,068	1,043	1,500	1,500	0
534200 PRINTING	1,445	1,447	1,029	1,500	1,500	0
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	3,029	3,532	4,441	3,500	3,500	0
548000 GASOLINE	485	765	0	0	0	0
548400 VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	9,736	10,960	744	2,000	2,000	0
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	378	448	0	1,000	500	-500
558500 COMPUTER SUPPLIES	619	1,565	0	5,000	5,000	0
559200 BOOKS/MANUALS/PERIODI	0	0	0	1,500	1,500	0
571000 VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	0	60	0	150	150	0
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	339	299	240	750	750	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	61,425	46,731	28,605	39,425	39,800	375
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	1,965	2,688	2,341	1,632	1,607	-25
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	66,609	77,952	65,689	73,358	61,372	-11,986
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	113	113	114	171	57
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	4,842	6,803	6,962	7,590	8,477	888
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	4,078	6,077	7,514	11,809	8,216	-3,592
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	77,551	93,634	82,620	94,502	79,844	-14,658
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	491,643	640,658	623,323	707,073	713,262	6,189

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ORIGINAL 2021	RECOMMENDED 2022	CHANGE 2021 to 2022	
0122041 - BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	377,950	384,858	378,712	389,797	396,314	6,517
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	132	0	0	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	3,650	4,000	3,917	3,500	4,500	1,000
514006	EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	11	4,881	0	0	0	0
515003	SPECIAL LEAVE BUY BAC	0	0	6,000	0	0	0
515005	BONUSES	1,750	1,500	0	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	1,656	3,143	7,452	4,000	4,000	0
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	2,500	2,500	2,000	2,500	2,500	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	0	125	0	0	0
	TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	387,649	400,882	398,205	399,797	407,314	7,517
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	673	20	72	1,500	1,500	0
548000	GASOLINE	2,567	1,669	25	0	0	0
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	0	0	1,250	750	-500
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	861	551	506	1,000	1,000	0
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	4	0	0	0	0	0
571100	IN-STATE CONFERENCES	65	0	0	0	0	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	100	0	0	250	250	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	68	100	0	200	200	0
	TOTAL EXPENSES	4,338	2,340	603	4,200	3,700	-500
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	1,509	1,569	1,734	1,398	1,405	7
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	48,156	52,085	59,219	67,551	56,499	-11,052
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	57	14	0	0	0
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	5,400	5,563	5,437	5,732	5,848	116
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	2,244	2,503	3,952	5,273	5,576	303
	TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	57,366	61,778	70,356	79,954	69,329	-10,625
	TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	449,353	465,000	469,165	483,951	480,343	-3,608

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ORIGINAL 2021	RECOMMENDED 2022	CHANGE 2021 to 2022
0122044 - WEIGHTS & MEASURES						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	76,362	78,670	81,672	83,801	65,446	-18,355
514001 LONGEVITY	0	0	0	2,000	0	-2,000
514317 ADMINISTRATIVE STIPEND	0	0	0	2,575	0	-2,575
514399 ADMIN SUPPORT STIPEND	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	78,862	81,170	84,172	88,376	65,446	-22,930
EXPENSES						
531900 TRAINING EXPENSES	0	0	50	0	100	100
534010 TELEPHONE	56	61	45	60	500	440
534030 BEEPERS	0	0	0	0	60	60
534200 PRINTING	200	341	0	400	0	-400
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	400	400
543200 SMALL TOOLS	0	322	0	900	0	-900
548000 GASOLINE	770	987	569	1,000	900	-100
548200 TIRES & TIRE SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
548400 VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	704	46	555	300	0	-300
558000 PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	154	160	170	300	300	0
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	0	127	0	100	300	200
571100 IN-STATE CONFERENCES	170	0	0	200	100	-100
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	60	50	60	100	200	100
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,115	2,093	1,449	3,360	3,860	500
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	216	225	225	234	202	-32
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	6,767	7,318	7,611	7,915	0	-7,915
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	57	57	57	57	0
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,110	1,142	1,175	1,281	1,252	-30
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	8,150	8,742	9,068	9,487	1,510	-7,977
TOTAL WEIGHTS & MEASURES	89,127	92,005	94,689	101,223	70,816	-30,407

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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		ACTUAL 2018	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ORIGINAL 2021	RECOMMENDED 2022	CHANGE 2021 to 2022
0122049 - MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	440,403	426,815	426,563	453,261	466,557	13,296
511101	PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	0	8,587	0	0	0	0
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	1,189	0	6,340	0	0	0
513050	WORK FOR OTHER DEPT	24	0	0	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	2,500	3,500	4,000	3,500	4,000	500
514006	EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	87	5,073	0	0	0	0
515005	BONUSES	2,100	1,800	0	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	9,202	3,129	4,514	4,000	4,000	0
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	3,000	3,250	2,500	3,000	3,000	0
515401	PRIVATE DUTY DETAILS	0	0	760	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES		458,505	452,153	444,677	463,761	477,557	13,796
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	1,202	1,184	2,589	2,500	2,500	0
543200	SMALL TOOLS	0	68	461	1,000	1,000	0
548000	GASOLINE	4,321	3,890	138	0	0	0
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	142	0	0	500	500	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	1,206	1,765	686	1,500	1,500	0
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	0	0	54	0	0	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	539	555	295	600	600	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	399	140	798	500	500	0
TOTAL EXPENSES		7,809	7,601	5,021	6,600	6,600	0
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	2,608	2,249	1,722	1,164	1,503	339
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	83,303	73,210	58,509	59,753	62,144	2,391
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	222	170	113	57	114	57
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	6,134	6,051	6,003	6,657	6,867	210
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	6,350	7,634	5,873	5,800	6,144	343
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS		98,617	89,314	72,220	73,431	76,771	3,340
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS		564,931	549,068	521,919	543,792	560,928	17,136
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SERVICES		1,595,053	1,746,731	1,709,096	1,836,039	1,825,349	-10,690