

Inspectional Services Department

Mission

To keep the record for all real property in the City, so that 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.

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.

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. In 2021 the City embarked on a new permitting system, NewGov, where we will consolidate the records of the City to enable all departments to view the same record, perform their inspections and approvals in real time, and allow all departments to operate more efficiently.

FY 2022 proved to be a considerably challenging and fulfilling year. As we started to emerge from the COVID restrictions, the workload for ISD increased. COVID has changed things and how they are perceived. Because of COVID much of the work ISD did at City Hall was largely back to normal, however, with masks, social distancing and with customer service windows opened only 8"-10".

In the field, our personnel continue to practice COVID safety protocols and handle an extraordinary volume of building and renovation work. We are seeing an unprecedented amount of work being done in Newton. Simultaneously, complaints about job site conditions, noise, property line issues, trespass, parking, trash, and job site behavior are at an all-time high. We believe that much of this is due to the fact that, in ordinary times, people were home less during the day to witness construction work in progress. Thankfully, ISD is fully staffed with field inspectors and a Code Enforcement Agent and we have been able to keep up with this rising tide.

Code Enforcement is always a challenge, but we have been fortunate to have a full-time Code Enforcement Agent who has been able to follow up and resolve many current and older complaints. ISD has a new part-time leaf blower enforcement agent who started at the end of 2021 and has already proven effective. He has required little training and "hit the ground running" in 2021. The Code Enforcement Agent has combined with the leaf blower enforcement agent to double the people we have focused on this issue.

2021 saw the successful start of the transformative OpenGov/NewGov permitting and information management system. On November 1st, Phase I of NewGov was launched with Plumbing, Gas and Electric permits being issued in the system. ISD has worked with several other city departments, notably Health and Human Services and Engineering, as they have also configured and implemented the use of NewGov for their departments. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the selection committee, the Information Technology Department, our consultant Dottie Keene, and individuals in the various city departments who stepped up to aid their departments in this project. The progress to this point would not have happened without Deb Finamore

(ISD), Sherri Lougee (HHS), Nick Cence (Eng.), and John Miker (IT). By May 2022, Phase II of NewGov will be in process and more features will be added in Phases III, IV and perhaps V.

The Periodic Inspection program has moved forward and started entering information into the NewGov system. This will allow all of our building inspections, renewal applications and correction reports to be generated automatically and Certificates of Inspection to become accessed easily by the City, clients and the public. The School Safety Program remains a top priority as our periodic inspector works with Public Buildings and the Newton Public Schools to ensure safety and compliance in all our buildings.

The Weights and Measures Inspector is working effectively and we are anticipating the inclusion of those records into NewGov in future phases. The application process and the certification process for weights and measures will then be automated and much simpler for both the City and the public.

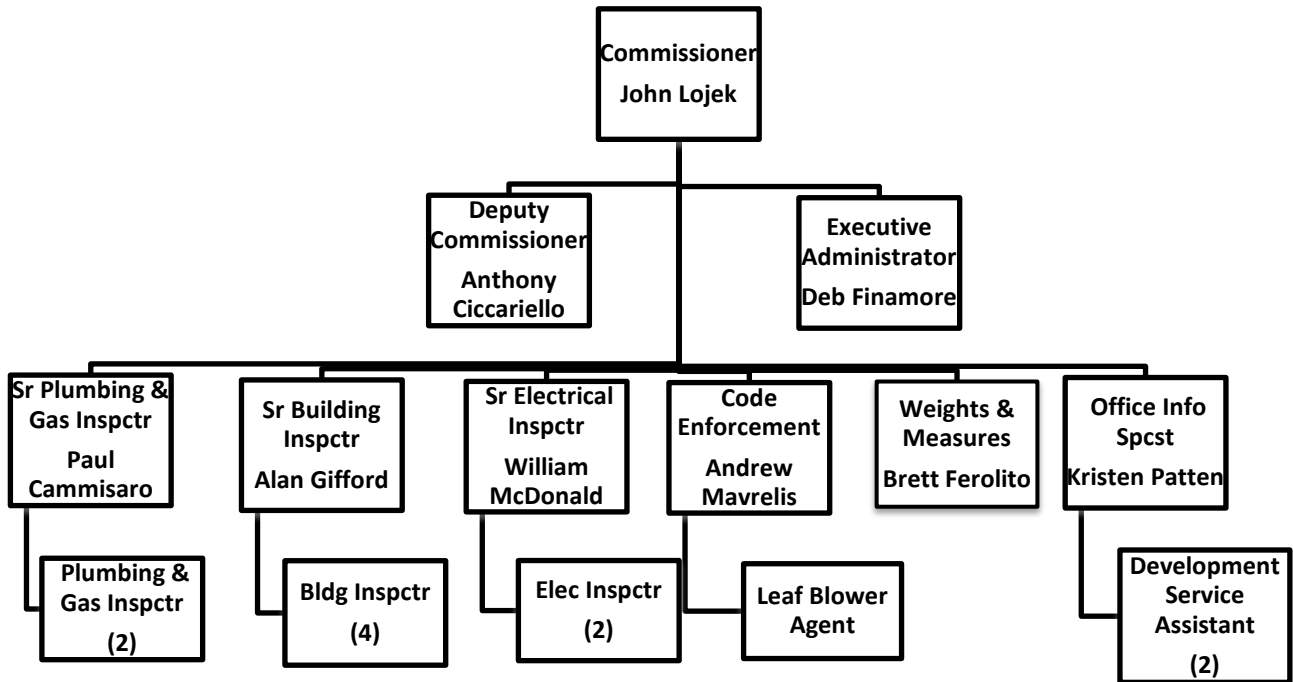
One of the great challenges during the past year has been the Development Services Assistant (DSA) positions. DSA's are the first contact point for most of our clients. They support all business counter transactions, provide customer service, data entry and support all of the work of the inspectors and staff. We have had excellent DSAs who move on to other positions, requiring us to rehire and retrain.

In this period of high demands on ISD, we are confident and committed to the advancement and education of all of our personnel so that we may provide excellent customer service and user-friendly access to all of our records.

John D. Lojek

John D. Lojek, Commissioner

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES



Financial and Operating Highlights

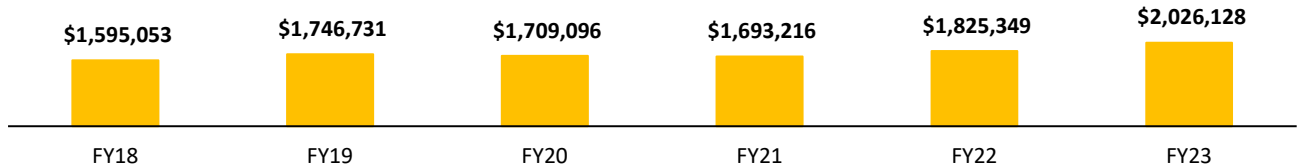
Financial Highlights

	< -----Actual ----->				Original	Proposed
	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Expenditure by Department						
Admin	\$ 491,643	\$ 640,658	\$ 623,323	\$ 576,075	\$ 713,262	\$ 771,024
Bldg Code Enf.	\$ 449,353	\$ 465,000	\$ 469,165	\$ 473,957	\$ 480,343	\$ 542,397
Mech Inspections	\$ 564,931	\$ 549,068	\$ 521,919	\$ 544,593	\$ 560,928	\$ 640,587
Weights & Measures	\$ 89,127	\$ 92,005	\$ 94,689	\$ 98,592	\$ 70,816	\$ 72,120
Total	\$ 1,595,053	\$ 1,746,731	\$ 1,709,096	\$ 1,693,216	\$ 1,825,349	\$ 2,026,128
% Incr	3.63%	9.51%	-2.15%	-0.93%	7.80%	11.00%

Personnel

Full-Time Employees	16	17	18	19	19	19
Part-Time Employee:	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	16	17	18	19	20	20

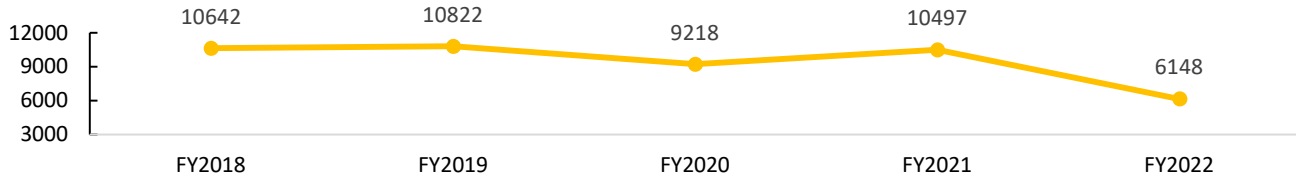
Total Inspectional Services Expenditures



Operating Highlights

	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022 YTD
Building Permits	3,721	3,968	3,534	4,266	2,279
Electrical Permits	3,169	3,017	2,422	2,712	1,751
Plumbing Permits	2,127	2,083	1,781	2,009	1,176
Gas Permits	1,625	1,754	1,481	1,510	942

Total Permits



Enforcement Requests (Mar 2021-Feb 2022)

New	Open	Closed	Closed 30 days
407	147	260	197

FY 2022 Building Permit Breakdowns to Date

Residential Construction (new)	65	Solar	151
Commercial (new)	0	Charging Stations	21
Demolition	67		

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2023 Outcomes and Strategies

Long before Newton City Hall is open, ISD is already at work. ISD opens for business at 7:00 a.m., every day, and remains open for 53 hours a week to serve the residents of Newton. Standard practice at ISD is to try and issue 90% of building permits the day they are submitted, with many clients choosing to wait briefly

so that they can walk away with their permit. At the present time, about 90% of plumbing, gas and electric permits are being applied for on-line in NewGov with some still being submitted on paper. This new permitting software system allows clients to avoid visiting City Hall and they receive permits electronically. Problems or issues with their application are resolved through email and system notifications. Customers, therefore, can apply 24/7/365. Soon all permits and transactions will be enabled through NewGov.

The ISD counter conversations are generally concerning resident's property, contractor's questions, the review of "what if's?" and persons looking to review their property folders. Many of our telephone inquiries have begun to be about property owners wanting to find out how to close open permits, as they have been told by their finance company or realtor that their closing 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.

The Zoning Code continues to evolve in the City and of course changes lead to questions, which require explanations. We come to recognize that changes to the retail and building environment leads to many questions as to use, many of which have become "gray areas."

The ISD staff is now, more than ever, required to be updated and trained in the nuances of the Zoning Code and the current interpretations. We attempt to regularly update staff on the ongoing changes.

Outcome 1

Provide 1st Class Customer Service

Outcome 2

Ensure Code Enforcement, School Safety, and Periodic Inspections

ISD enforces the provisions of the 780 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR), State Building Code, the City of Newton Zoning Code, and various City Ordinances. "Strict code enforcement makes the city safer" is a longstanding motto of Newton ISD. All of the codes that ISD is responsible for enforcing

lead to a safer and more liveable Newton. Our daily goal is to protect the life and safety of the residents and visitors to the city through our work.

To this end, the City's ISD is involved in many activities, such as the School Safety Program, Periodic Inspections, and general code enforcement. Our current conversion to the NewGov permitting and information management system will aid ISD in becoming more effective in its efforts to cite and track code enforcement issues within the city. We have now entered what might be considered the maintenance phase of the School Safety Program as previous year's efforts achieved Certificates of Occupancy for all Newton Public Schools. We continue to monitor the schools with an eye to ensuring there is continued compliance we have worked so hard with NPS to achieve. This was and is all

Inspectional Services Department

Fiscal Year 2023 Outcomes and Strategies

accomplished with the cooperation of the School Department, Fire Department, City Buildings, and the City Administration. While problematic buildings and situations will arise, these have been minimized through a multi-year program.

The Periodic Inspection program contains all the other properties and buildings in the city that involve a public assembly component. Restaurants, theaters, licensed establishments, churches, synagogues, private schools, daycares, meeting halls, etc. are all inspected under this program. ISD devotes one of the full-time inspectors to just this program as it involves approximately 825 separate inspections over the course of the year. This program has now begun to be recorded and tracked in the NewGov system for up-to-date future access.

Our full time Zoning and Code Enforcement Inspector has made significant progress in following through on complaints and violations. Because of the Code Enforcement Officer's ability to dedicate full attention to these issues, many, if not most, violators choose to comply rather than be fined or go to court. Our present code enforcement program is proving to be quite successful.

Welcome to the world of electronic permitting in the City of Newton. The city has successfully launched a new permitting and municipal information management system called NewGov. The program was selected, by a selection committee, from numerous applicants. The selection process led the city to decide to choose OpenGov/ Viewpoint as the vendor. The OpenGov system is a very comprehensive suite of applications that will enable departments of the city to issue and track permits, property information, licensing information and more. We have already been engaged with OpenGov for nearly a year in the creation of record types, workflows, permissions, data transfer, etc. To date, ISD and Health have been active in converting some, if not all, of their permitting and information to the new cloud-based system.

ISD has started as of November 1, 2021 issuing all electric, plumbing and gas permits on the new platform. The inspectors are training to enter and approve permits in real time, enabling follow-on inspectors to know the status of the project. ISD is now embarked on the implementation of on-line building permits, which is a very large undertaking expected to become active in May 2022. Additionally, ISD will be aiding the entry into NewGov of the Planning Department, including Conservation, Historic, and Special Permits as well as the Engineering and Fire Departments, and Clerk's Office. Workflow becomes essential in this Phase II process and there are many steps to a successful result.

ISD issues more than 10,000 permits per year for building, plumbing, gas and electric. We are also in the process of creating a "zoning permit" to cover fences, signs, sheds as well as other zoning related matters that come to our office. The time saving of a fully implemented NewGov system will be enormous. Other City departments will benefit as well from time saving issuance of permits and approvals. More importantly, the City of Newton can become far more transparent with public information and disseminate that information passively.

Outcome 3

Expand the Permitting and
Information Management System,
NewGov

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

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ORIGINAL 2022	RECOMMENDED 2023	CHANGE 2022 to 2023
220 - INSPECTIONAL SERVICES						
0122040 - INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	426,035	462,239	448,982	548,968	560,241	11,273
511101 PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	0	0	0	25,000	30,000	5,000
512001 SEASONAL WAGES	24,840	1,566	0	0	0	0
513010 REGULAR OVERTIME	11,564	4,815	10,274	15,000	25,000	10,000
51301B OVERTIME/SPEC PROJEC	31,514	34,990	0	0	0	0
514001 LONGEVITY	2,150	2,250	3,317	2,650	3,300	650
514006 EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	1,791	0	0	0	0	0
515005 BONUSES	900	0	0	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	0	4,739	11,053	0	0	0
515102 CLEANING ALLOWANCE	1,500	1,500	1,500	2,000	2,000	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	500,293	512,099	475,126	593,618	620,541	26,923
EXPENSES						
524010 OFFICE EQUIPMENT R-M	0	200	0	200	200	0
524030 MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	0	0	100	0	0	0
527400 RENTAL - EQUIPMENT	0	1,723	2,297	6,000	7,000	1,000
530100 CONSULTANTS	0	0	0	0	10,000	10,000
530400 DOCUMENT PRESERVATI	13,371	5,227	0	0	0	0
534010 TELEPHONE	1,394	1,042	1,126	1,200	1,200	0
534020 CELLULAR TELEPHONES	11,821	12,915	12,694	16,000	16,000	0
534100 POSTAGE	1,068	1,043	1,023	1,500	1,500	0
534200 PRINTING	1,447	1,029	2,072	1,500	1,500	0
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	3,532	4,441	2,974	3,500	3,500	0
548000 GASOLINE	765	0	0	0	1,050	1,050
548400 VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	10,960	744	979	2,000	2,500	500
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	448	0	0	500	500	0
558500 COMPUTER SUPPLIES	1,565	0	0	5,000	2,500	-2,500
559200 BOOKS/MANUALS/PERIODI	0	0	0	1,500	500	-1,000
571000 VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	60	0	0	150	150	0
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	299	240	510	750	750	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	46,731	28,605	23,775	39,800	48,850	9,050
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	2,688	2,341	1,664	1,607	1,607	0
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	77,952	65,689	60,610	61,372	78,810	17,438
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	113	113	123	171	57	-114
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	6,803	6,962	6,468	8,477	8,635	158
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	6,077	7,514	8,309	8,216	12,524	4,308
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	93,634	82,620	77,174	79,844	101,633	21,789
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SVS ADMIN	640,658	623,323	576,075	713,262	771,024	57,762

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ORIGINAL 2022	RECOMMENDED 2023	CHANGE 2022 to 2023
0122041 - BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	384,858	378,712	389,819	396,314	452,073	55,759
513010 REGULAR OVERTIME	0	0	317	0	0	0
514001 LONGEVITY	4,000	3,917	3,500	4,500	5,000	500
514006 EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	4,881	0	0	0	0	0
515003 SPECIAL LEAVE BUY BAC	0	6,000	0	0	0	0
515005 BONUSES	1,500	0	0	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	3,143	7,452	3,206	4,000	4,000	0
515101 CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	2,500	2,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	0
515102 CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	125	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	400,882	398,205	399,341	407,314	463,573	56,259
EXPENSES						
531900 TRAINING EXPENSES	20	72	0	1,500	1,500	0
548000 GASOLINE	1,669	25	0	0	2,291	2,291
558000 PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	0	0	750	750	0
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	551	506	580	1,000	600	-400
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	0	0	0	250	250	0
577100 PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	100	0	0	200	200	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,340	603	580	3,700	5,591	1,891
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	1,569	1,734	1,624	1,405	1,405	0
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	52,085	59,219	61,702	56,499	58,759	2,260
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	14	0	0	0	0
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	5,563	5,437	5,458	5,848	6,664	816
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	2,503	3,952	5,252	5,576	6,404	828
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	61,778	70,356	74,036	69,329	73,233	3,904
TOTAL BLDG CODE/ZONING ENFMT	465,000	469,165	473,957	480,343	542,397	62,054

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ORIGINAL 2022	RECOMMENDED 2023	CHANGE 2022 to 2023
0122044 - WEIGHTS & MEASURES						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	78,670	81,672	81,006	65,446	67,875	2,429
514001 LONGEVITY	0	0	1,333	0	0	0
514308 SPECIALIST PAY	0	0	481	0	0	0
514399 ADMIN SUPPORT STIPEND	2,500	2,500	1,250	0	0	0
515003 SPECIAL LEAVE BUY BAC	0	0	6,000	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	81,170	84,172	90,070	65,446	67,875	2,429
EXPENSES						
524030 MOTOR VEHICLE R-M	0	0	68	0	0	0
531900 TRAINING EXPENSES	0	50	0	100	100	0
534010 TELEPHONE	61	45	49	500	100	-400
534030 BEEPERS	0	0	0	60	0	-60
534200 PRINTING	341	0	0	0	0	0
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	0	0	0	400	250	-150
543200 SMALL TOOLS	322	0	911	0	0	0
548000 GASOLINE	987	569	501	900	1,354	454
548200 TIRES & TIRE SUPPLIES	0	0	0	1,000	500	-500
548400 VEHICLE REPAIR PARTS	46	555	29	0	0	0
558000 PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	160	170	0	300	300	0
558100 UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	127	0	0	300	300	0
571100 IN-STATE CONFERENCES	0	0	0	100	100	0
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	50	60	0	200	200	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,093	1,449	1,558	3,860	3,204	-656
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	225	225	144	202	0	-202
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	7,318	7,611	5,480	0	0	0
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	57	57	61	57	57	0
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,142	1,175	1,278	1,252	984	-268
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	8,742	9,068	6,963	1,510	1,041	-469
TOTAL WEIGHTS & MEASURES	92,005	94,689	98,592	70,816	72,120	1,304

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

		ACTUAL 2019	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ORIGINAL 2022	RECOMMENDED 2023	CHANGE 2022 to 2023
0122049 - MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	426,815	426,563	457,863	466,557	536,513	69,956
511101	PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	8,587	0	0	0	0	0
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	0	6,340	1,616	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	3,500	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	0
514006	EXCEPTIONAL SVS PAY	5,073	0	0	0	0	0
515005	BONUSES	1,800	0	0	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	3,129	4,514	3,282	4,000	4,000	0
515101	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	3,250	2,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	0
515401	PRIVATE DUTY DETAILS	0	760	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES		452,153	444,677	469,760	477,557	547,513	69,956
EXPENSES							
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	1,184	2,589	150	2,500	2,500	0
543200	SMALL TOOLS	68	461	44	1,000	1,000	0
548000	GASOLINE	3,890	138	0	0	5,339	5,339
558000	PUBLIC SAFETY SUPPLIES	0	0	0	500	500	0
558100	UNIFORMS/PROTECTIVE	1,765	686	525	1,500	1,500	0
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	0	54	0	0	0	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	555	295	445	600	600	0
577100	PROFESSIONAL LICENSES	140	798	0	500	500	0
TOTAL EXPENSES		7,601	5,021	1,164	6,600	11,939	5,339
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	2,249	1,722	1,548	1,503	1,503	0
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	73,210	58,509	59,754	62,144	64,629	2,486
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	170	113	113	114	114	0
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	6,051	6,003	6,390	6,867	7,881	1,014
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	7,634	5,873	5,863	6,144	7,007	863
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS		89,314	72,220	73,668	76,771	81,135	4,364
TOTAL MECHANICAL INSPECTIONS		549,068	521,919	544,593	560,928	640,587	79,659
TOTAL INSPECTIONAL SERVICES		1,746,731	1,709,096	1,693,216	1,825,349	2,026,128	200,778