

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS CROSS-TRAINS ENFORCEMENT TEAM AND
OPENS BROOKLYN / STATEN ISLAND BOROUGH OFFICE**

DCA Enforcement Decentralized with Inspectors in Four Borough Offices

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New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra, joined by local elected officials and community boards, today announced the agency decentralization of its enforcement operations into four borough offices and celebrated by cutting a ribbon at its Brooklyn / Staten Island office in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

The newly-created office streamlines DCA's enforcement operations by cross-training inspectors to know all the laws the agency enforces rather than separate categories. Staff now works more closely with Community Boards and other City agencies to coordinate efforts and respond to complaints quickly. DCA's Brooklyn and Staten Island enforcement team is cross-trained in a number of areas including routine testing of scales, consumer protection violations, sidewalk cafes, peddlers, license checks, and other areas.

"Having a home base in Brooklyn makes our efforts to protect consumers more efficient and allows us to have better relationships with the businesses in both boroughs," said DCA Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra. "By cross-training our inspectors we respond to complaints quicker, work more closely with Community Boards, small businesses, and other City agencies, and have a real sense of what is happening in the neighborhoods."

DCA's enforcement team in Brooklyn now includes a Borough Director and eight inspectors. Last year, the DCA conducted more than 11,600 inspections in Brooklyn and Staten Island combined and issued citations for unlicensed activity (674), Consumer Protection Law (1,986), license law (2,844), and weights and measures (3,147) violations. The DCA test station also houses the Weights and Measures Division, which is responsible for testing gas and fuel accuracy levels, higher capacity scale accuracy, and accuracy of pre-packaged goods for retailers citywide.

In addition, the DCA continues its business education initiative in all five boroughs aimed at informing small businesses about the City's Consumer Protection Law. This summer, the department joined dozens of community members, BIDs, and others to blanket neighborhoods in both boroughs with informational materials. For a copy of the DCA What Retailers Need to Know and What Service Companies Need to Know, call 311 or go online at www.nyc.gov/consumers.

DCA enforces the consumer protection laws, as well as other related City and State laws, at thousands of businesses throughout New York City. DCA licenses more than 60,000 businesses in 55 different categories in New York City and educates both consumers and businesses alike through free community seminars, licensing forums, and other informational materials. To file a complaint, call 311 or visit DCA online at www.nyc.gov/consumers.