



**NYC** Buildings  
**BIENNIAL REPORT**  
**2007 - 2008**





## BUILDINGS BY THE NUMBERS

Buildings	975,000
Employees	1,309
Inspectors	436
Plan Examiners	231
Borough Offices	5

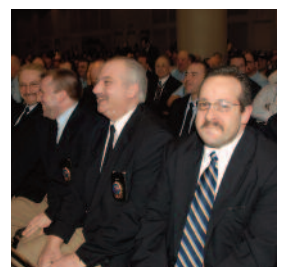
## AT A GLANCE

	2007	2008
311 Calls	503,715	504,684
Inspections	436,640	454,478
Plan Reviews	432,415	458,608
Construction Permits	122,103	121,093
Violations	57,838	65,578
Licenses & Registrations	12,843	15,452
Certificates of Occupancy	12,122	10,444
Stop Work Orders	9,991	14,807
New Building Applications	6,079	3,379

# **NYC**<sup>TM</sup> Buildings **BIENNIAL REPORT**

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## **2 0 0 7 - 2 0 0 8**







Buildings Department Headquarters, 280 Broadway, Manhattan. Photo: Sy Bram





# BIENNIAL REPORT

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## 2 0 0 7 - 2 0 0 8

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Commissioner's Greeting

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

May 2009

Dear Friends:

New York City has undergone a period of remarkable growth and change over the past seven years, which has created jobs, strengthened our economy, and presented new opportunities for New Yorkers and local businesses. A growing city, however, also presents its own set of unique challenges. That's why, with safety as its number one priority, the Department of Buildings is creating and implementing a wide range of innovative enforcement programs to protect all those who live in, work in, and visit New York, including the city's 125,000 construction workers.

The Department of Buildings continues to adapt its operations to meet the changing needs of an ever-evolving city. Last year, the new NYC Construction Codes went into effect—the first overhaul of the city's building code in nearly forty years—which will help make building in New York City safer, easier, and faster. By introducing environmentally friendly design provisions and requiring a three-year revision cycle, the new Codes will also be instrumental in creating the greener, greater New York outlined in *PlaNYC*, helping our city set the bar for urban sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While these tough economic times require us to do more with less, the Department is intensely focused on keeping this city building and growing for the future. As we move forward and address the challenges of the current downturn, nothing is more important than safety, and we will continue working with labor and industry leaders to ensure that we do everything possible – and then some – to avoid tragic accidents.

The Department of Buildings has made enormous strides over the past seven years in dramatically improving customer service, overhauling antiquated systems, increasing transparency, and strengthening integrity. This report outlines our latest efforts in these and other areas as we work to build a stronger, safer, and more sustainable future for our entire city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael R. Bloomberg'.

Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor



May 2009



Dear Fellow New Yorkers:

It has been nearly eight years since our Department began a comprehensive transformation to make our services more transparent and accountable to the public. Much of this was achieved during the past two years: We overhauled New York City's outdated and cumbersome building code; created new safety and enforcement teams to deter non-compliance; and launched innovative technology initiatives to enable New Yorkers to access critical information about construction in their communities.

We began 2007 at the peak of an unprecedented period of growth. Defying the national economic slowdown that year, we issued more than 122,000 construction permits. This extraordinary level of sustained construction activity, however, brought an alarming human cost. To protect New Yorkers from the inherent dangers of construction and to hold responsible parties accountable, we launched the Special Enforcement Plan, imposed strict new requirements on crane operations, and invested \$4 million to find ways to make high-risk construction safer. Thanks to unwavering support from Mayor Michael Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn and Council Member Erik Martin Dilan, we were able to increase our inspectorial force, strengthen our enforcement powers and raise New York City's construction safety standards.

This July, the new NYC Construction Codes become obligatory, raising our safety standards, increasing the opportunity for construction savings, and enabling innovative and sustainable design. As we head into the years beyond, we look forward to partnering with the industry to make New York City construction more efficient, less expensive and – most importantly – safer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert D. LiMandri". The signature is fluid and stylized, with the first name "Robert" and last name "LiMandri" clearly legible.

Robert D. LiMandri  
Commissioner  
New York City Department of Buildings



## OUR AGENCY

New York City's building regulations began in 1624, when the Dutch West India Company established the New Amsterdam settlement. The company enhanced safety and sanitation by governing the houses colonists could build. These early standards evolved into one of the most comprehensive building regulation systems in the United States.

Today, the New York City Buildings Department regulates the safe and legal use of 975,000 buildings and properties by enforcing the NYC Construction Codes and Zoning Resolution. The Department's 1,309 inspectors, architects and engineers, plan examiners, attorneys, project managers, analysts and support staff examine archi-

tectural plans, issue permits, inspect work sites, investigate complaints, issue violations and respond to emergencies. In 2008, the Department issued 121,093 construction permits, conducted 454,478 inspections, and issued or renewed 15,452 licenses and registrations.

Over the course of 2007 and 2008, Buildings has focused on improving construction safety by increasing transparency, accountability and efficiency in its operations. The Agency is harnessing new technology, implementing innovative enforcement initiatives and working with the industry to improve construction safety. This Biennial Report chronicles the Department's commitment to these goals.



**MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG**

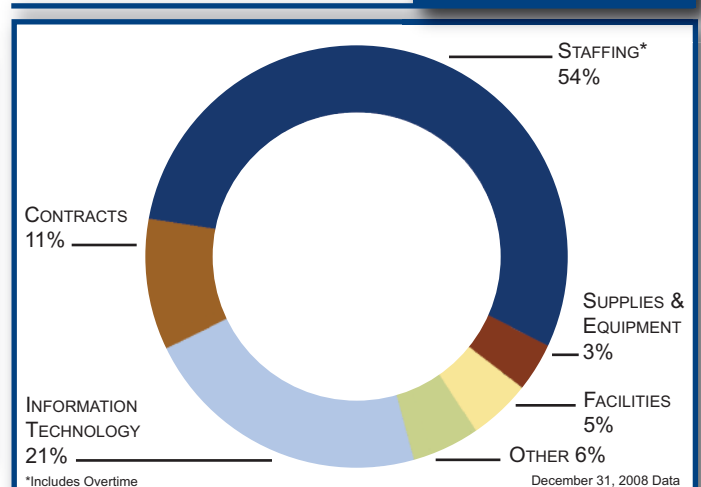
“The Buildings Department is on the front lines of public safety, and it is working to see that there are no shortcuts when it comes to protecting the 125,000 construction workers in this City and the millions who live here. Under Robert LiMandri's leadership, the Department has launched innovative enforcement programs to tackle high-risk construction activities, and by doing so, he is raising the standards of safety and improving industry accountability.”

### REVENUES AND EXPENSES

Agency Resources	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08
Expenditures (\$ millions)*	\$ 57.9	\$ 64.3	\$ 81.5	\$ 87.2	\$ 99.4
Revenues (\$ millions)	\$ 99.4	\$ 114.4	\$ 124.5	\$ 133.0	\$ 152.9
Budgeted Personnel	901	979	1,093	1,181	1,240

\* Expenditures do not include fringe benefits.

### AGENCY SPENDING



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## INTEGRITY & SERVICE

GOAL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE STATUS
Reinforce Ethical Standards	Issue Code of Conduct to Contractors and Staff	✓
Improve Inspection Quality	Standardize Inspection Checklists	In Progress
Advance Professionalism	Issue Inspector Uniforms	✓
Automate Field Inspection Data	Develop B-FIRST Handheld Computer Technology	Launches 2009
Educate Industry on 2008 Codes	Conduct Industry Code Trainings	✓
Improve Data Retrieval & Analysis	Enable B-SMART Data Software	✓
Increase Public Access to Documents	Implement B-SCAN Online Document Imaging & Access	✓
Enhance Public Access to Development Information	Enable Online Public Access to Zoning Diagrams	In Progress
Foster Professional Development	Create Employee Career Counseling Programs	In Progress
Increase Consumer Access to Information	Launch Licensee Web Search Program	✓
Expand eFiling System	Streamline Construction Application Filing	✓
Modernize IT Infrastructure	Invest \$22 Million for Technological Enhancements	✓

## SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

GOAL	INITIATIVE	INITIATIVE STATUS
Modernize 1968 Building Code	Develop & Enact New NYC Construction Codes	✓
Improve Crane Operations Safety	Implement High-Risk Construction Oversight Plan Recommendations	In Progress
Advance Concrete Operations Safety	Implement High-Risk Construction Oversight Plan Recommendations	In Progress
Increase Concrete Operations Oversight	Require Concrete Safety Manager Registration	In Progress
Improve Excavations Safety	Implement High-Risk Construction Oversight Plan Recommendations	In Progress
Raise Excavations Field Standards	Create Excavations Best Practices Guide	In Progress
Improve Excavations Compliance	Create Excavations Audit & Inspection Team	✓
Strengthen Industry Safety Inspections	Increase Special Inspectors' Qualifications & Accountability	✓
Improve Construction, Demolition & Abatement (CDA) Operations	Implement CDA Report Recommendations	In Progress
Improve Demolition Standards & Compliance	Create Standard Operating Procedure	In Progress
Reduce Construction Fire Risk	Jointly Inspect Lightweight Materials With FDNY	Pilot Launched
Improve Low Rise Site Safety	Create Construction Superintendent Rule	✓
Improve Scaffold Safety	Create Scaffold Safety Team; Form OSHA Alliance; Implement Recommendations From Scaffold Task Force	✓
Increase 1-, 2-, 3-Family Home Contractor Oversight	Require General Contractor Registration	✓
Improve Safety of Microturbine Installation	Publish Microturbine Rule	✓
Raise Professional Certification Standards	Develop Qualification Requirements for Program	In Progress
Increase Professional Certification Compliance	Create Professional Certifications & Audits Inspections Team	✓
Improve Professional Certification Accountability	Refuse Construction Applications Using "False Filing" Law	Ongoing
Increase Stop Work Order Compliance	Create Stop Work Order Patrol and Increase Penalties	✓
Enforce Code and Zoning Resolution	Create Special Enforcement Team to Maintain Integrity of Professional Certification Program	✓
Combat Illegal Sign Advertising	Launch Illegal Ad Enforcement Campaign	✓



# OPERATIONS BY THE BOROUGH

We serve New Yorkers through our central and borough offices. Our borough office employees conduct most of our daily activities, including inspections and emergency response. The central office is in Manhattan; many of its units work directly with the construction industry and public on specific processes and machinery, such as cranes, elevators and scaffolds.

## BOROUGH OFFICES THE BRONX

Our Bronx employees will see increasing volume in their office: 1.47 million residents could live in the Bronx by 2030. In 2008, our inspectors there responded to 10,460 construction complaints, 6% above 2007.

## BROOKLYN

Buildings employees in Brooklyn are meeting a surge in office traffic. New Building permits there have increased nearly 10% since 2006, and our teams conducted 39,816 construction inspections in 2008, up 14% from 2007.

## MANHATTAN

Our Manhattan borough office remains busy; its technical team examined 164,317 plans in 2008 –18% more than in 2007. With 1.83 million Manhattan residents expected by 2030, our borough employees are committed to meeting this growth.

## QUEENS

In 2008, our Queens employees cut customer wait time by nearly 60% to 17 minutes – and assisted 1,500 more customers than in 2007. Our teams also responded to 42,979 complaints in 2008, 10% more than in 2007.

## STATEN ISLAND

Between 2000 and 2006, Staten Island's population grew nearly 8%, approximately four times the other boroughs' growth.\* Our Staten Island employees are dedicated to meeting this growth, and in 2008, our inspectors were more productive by responding to 9% more complaints than in 2007.

\* Change in Population, Census Bureau and Department of City Planning Estimates (April 2000 to July 2006)



## CENTRAL OFFICE

### BUILDING ENFORCEMENT SAFETY TEAM

Conducts unannounced construction safety inspections at major buildings and demolitions.

### BOILERS

Advances boiler system safety, testing and lawful use.

### CALL CENTER

Schedules specific inspections; coordinates emergency public communications.

### CRANES & DERRICKS

Analyzes technical applications; issues permits; investigates accidents; inspects for safety and compliance.

### ELECTRICAL

Reviews applications; issues permits; inspects installations.

### ELEVATORS

Strengthens elevator, escalator and amusement ride safety.

### EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

Responds to emergencies; inspects for safety and compliance; coordinates activities with FDNY and other agencies.

### EXCAVATIONS

Inspects for safety and code compliance; responds to emergencies; advances best practices.

### FAÇADE INTEGRITY & AUDIT/ENFORCEMENT

Reviews technical reports; monitors maintenance compliance.

### FORENSIC ENGINEERING UNIT

Provides expertise in daily operations; investigates accidents; responds to emergencies.

### LICENSING

Determines applicant qualification; issues and renews trade licenses and registrations.

### LIMITED ALTERATION APPLICATIONS

Renews permits; issues minor plumbing permits; assesses Work Without Permit penalty fees.

### OFFICE OF TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION & RESEARCH

Evaluates alternative material technology; governs approved agency certifications.

### SCAFFOLDS

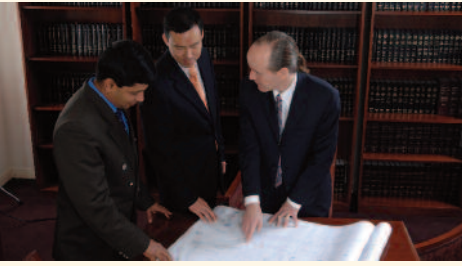
Conducts audits, inspections, worker outreach; responds to emergencies and complaints.

### SPECIAL OPERATIONS

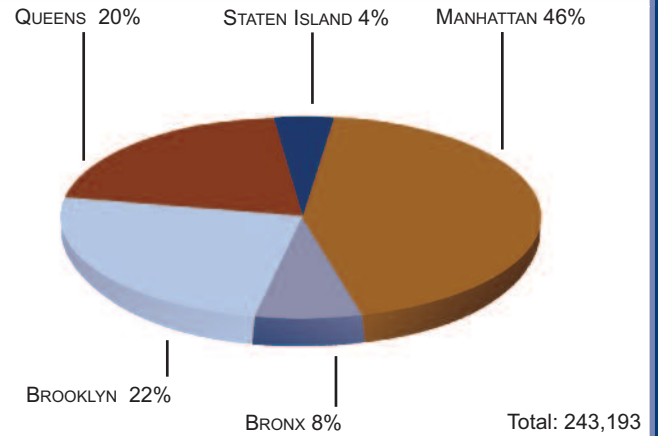
Leads specialized inspections for key projects.



# BOROUGHES BY THE NUMBERS

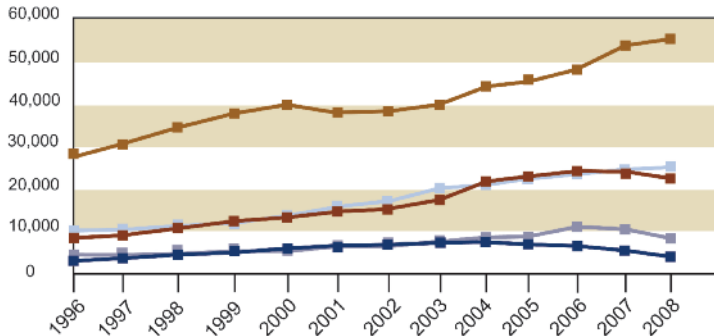


## 2007 - 2008 PERMITS ISSUED



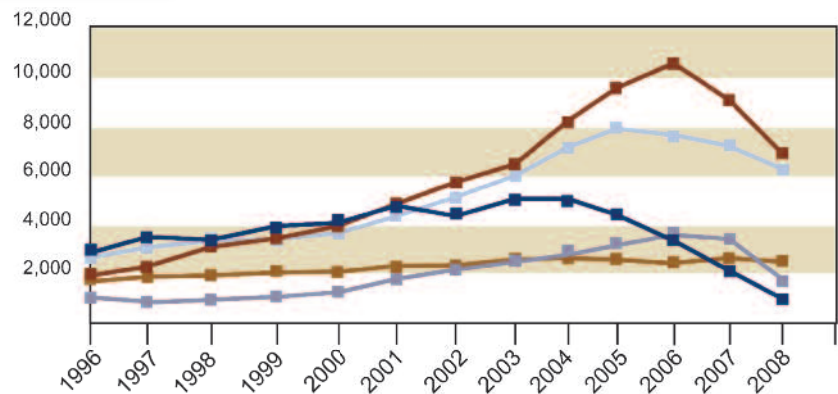
## CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

### ALL PERMIT TYPES



## NEW BUILDINGS & MAJOR ALTERATIONS

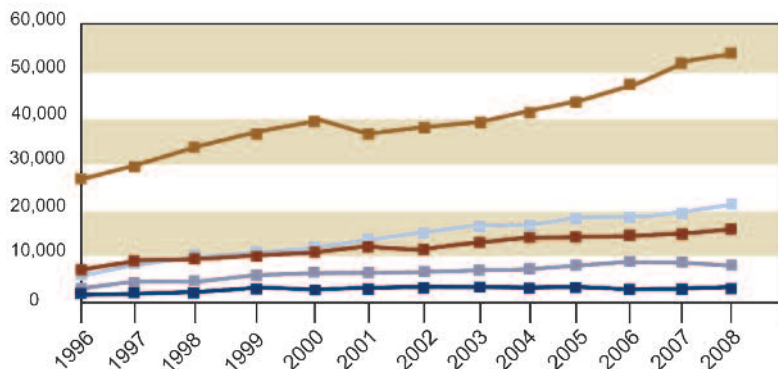
### NEW BUILDING & ALTERATION 1 PERMITS



Alt 1 permits apply to larger construction projects (e.g. requiring Certificate of Occupancy change, additional floors, etc.).

## MINOR ALTERATIONS

### ALTERATION 2 & 3 PERMITS



Alt 2 permits apply to projects that include multiple work types.  
Alt 3 permits apply to projects that include a single work type.

Overall construction permits remained flat in 2008. Fewer applications for major construction projects and additional applications for minor alterations resulted in 1% fewer overall permits from 2007.



## SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT



Protecting construction workers and New Yorkers from dangerous construction demands strong legal authority, resources and trained employees to enforce safety regulations. Using new funding and new legislation, we are creating a modern, analysis-based, proactive enforcement organization.

We're devising new tactics to raise construction safety standards. We're training our inspectors and plan examiners in new protocols and requirements, and implementing new legislation to increase required training. In 2008, we launched our groundbreaking High-Risk Construction Oversight initiative to conduct an in-depth analysis of the industry's concrete, crane and excavations operations and to find ways to improve regulations.

Thanks to the collective support from Mayor Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Housing and Buildings Committee Chairman Erik Martin Dilan and City

Councilman James Oddo, we were able to create the Special Enforcement Plan in 2007. This program launched enforcement teams that conduct inspections, educate the industry and address Professional Certification abuse – before problems arise.

While development revitalizes our City, we will not allow it at the expense of public and worker safety. The crane collapses in 2008 and the rise in construction accidents, from 112 in 2007 to 151 in 2008, strengthened our resolve. Construction's inherent dangers mean we must remain vigilant. This requires commitment from the government and partnership with the construction industry to improve safety. We owe no less to the people who build New York City.

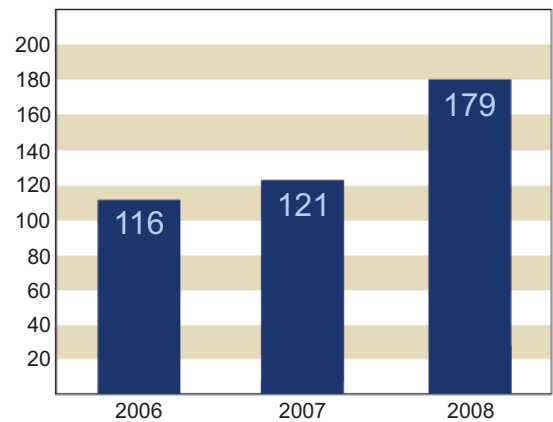
**RICHARD MENDELSON,  
OSHA AREA DIRECTOR**

**“OSHA is pleased to continue to strengthen its working relationship with the New York City Department of Buildings. It's important that we use all available tools – both enforcement and compliance assistance – to keep workers safe on the job.”**

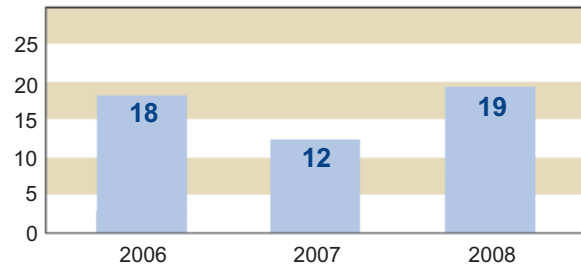
# SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT BY THE NUMBERS



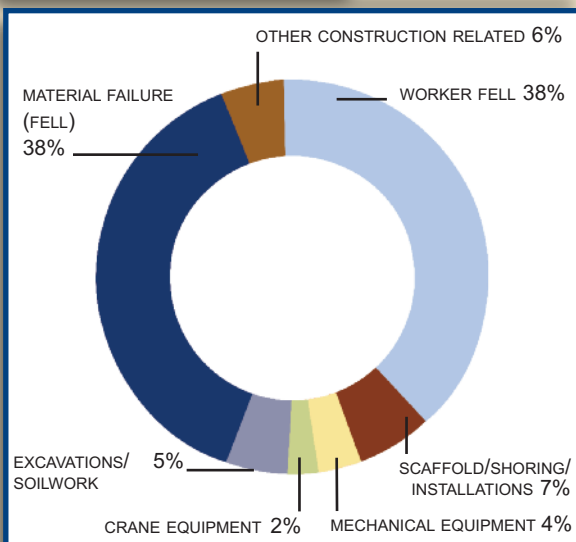
## CONSTRUCTION INJURIES



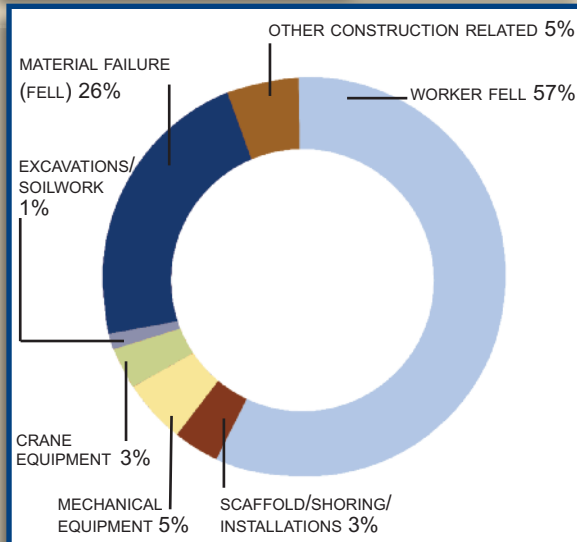
## CONSTRUCTION FATALITIES



## 2007 ACCIDENT CAUSES



## 2008 ACCIDENT CAUSES



**Material and worker falls were key concerns in 2007 and 2008. To minimize inherent dangers in construction, the Department launched its High-Risk Construction Oversight study, and implementation of the study's recommendations is underway.**



# SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

We're employing new, innovative strategies to advance construction safety. Our High-Risk Construction Oversight initiative is improving the industry's practices and our oversight; we're leading an international crane safety dialogue; and we're educating contractors on the safest means to conduct high-risk work. We're doing this because it takes our partnership – Buildings, the construction industry, owners, contractors and workers – to make New York City's construction safer.



## HIGH-RISK CONSTRUCTION OVERSIGHT STUDY

Thanks to a \$4 million investment by Mayor Bloomberg, we were able to create the High-Risk Construction Oversight initiative. HRCO is our blueprint for long-term safety improvements. This systemic field analysis is providing an in-depth understanding of concrete, excavations and crane operations and guiding the development of effective industry regulation. HRCO led to more than 40 recommendations to improve high-risk construction safety, and we are now developing an implementation plan to put them into action.

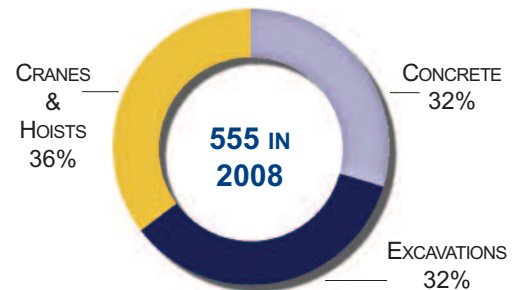
## TOWER CRANE SAFETY INITIATIVES

New York City's densely built urban environment leaves little room for error, and the 2008 crane collapses revealed the need for new safety measures and enforcement. They also highlighted that cranes' interchangeable parts and transitory nature demand increased local regulation, an understanding of other jurisdictions' best practices, national standards, federal government oversight and commitment from the construction industry to improve safety. During 2008, the Department:

- Instituted tough new jumping protocols;
- Launched a crane inspection sweep;
- Commenced the HRCO study;
- Led an emergency safety summit; and
- Testified before a congressional committee to support strengthened OSHA regulations.



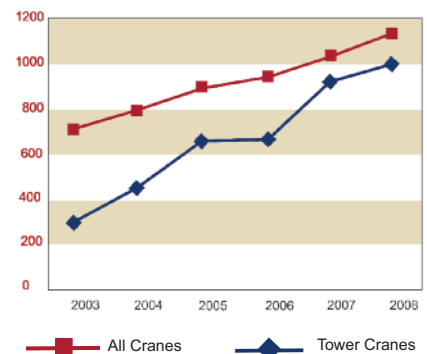
## HRCO INSPECTIONS



## INTERNATIONAL CRANE CONFERENCE

The Buildings Department hosted an International Crane Safety Conference to thoroughly understand challenges in tower crane operations and regulations across the United States and around the world. Representatives from 15 national and international regulatory entities attended, and our collaboration with them continues.

## Crane Applications



International Crane Conference, October 2008

## STRENGTHENED ENFORCEMENT & SAFETY LEGISLATION

Mayor Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Quinn and Housing and Buildings Committee Chairman Dilan empowered the Department with a groundbreaking package of legislation. With the construction industry's partnership, these crucial Local Laws are enhancing construction safety:

### Crane Safety

- 46/08 Mandates Tower Crane Safety Meetings
- 45/08 Limits Tower Crane Nylon Sling Use
- 44/08 Strengthens Training Requirements

### Construction Safety

- 41/08 Enhances Site Safety Plans
- 40/08 Mandates Concrete Site Safety Managers
- 34/08 Increases Penalties
- 29/08 Formalizes Department Accident Reporting
- 65/07 Increases Blasting Safety; Blasting Notice
- 18/07 Increases Rigger Safety Violation Penalties
- 17/07 Mandates Suspended Scaffold Notice

### Building & Property Safety

- 37/08 Requires Retaining Wall Inspections
- 33/08 Requires Structurally Compromised Building Inspections
- 38/07 Improves Façade Inspection Timing
- 37/07 Increases Illegal Conversion Penalties
- 16/07 Mandates Daily Suspended Scaffold Inspections

### Training & Qualifications

- 24/08 Heightens Scaffold Safety Training
- 36/07 Mandates 1-, 2-, 3-Family Home Contractor Registration

### Professional Qualifications & Discipline

- 27/08 Formalizes State Notice of Professionals' Disciplinary Action
- 4/07 Mandates Sanctions for Professional Certification Abuse
- 3/07 Heightens Oversight of State-Disciplined Professionals

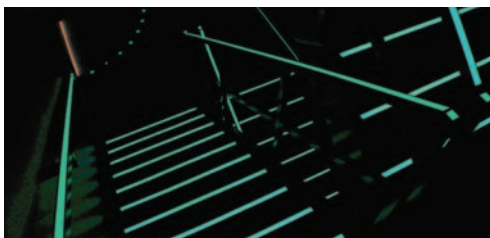


## NEW YORK CITY'S NEW CONSTRUCTION CODES

For the first time in more than 40 years, New York City now has new, modernized building codes that advance state-of-the-art safety and sustainability standards. Led by former Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, our Codes team partnered with 400 real estate, design and construction professionals who volunteered 300,000 hours to help draft the new NYC Construction Codes. These new Codes went into effect in 2008 and emphasize safety, savings and innovation. In fact, the International Code Council honored the Department with its 2008 "Raising the Profile Award" for our efforts to improve public safety.

### PHOTOLUMINESCENT REGULATIONS

New York City's glow-in-the-dark safety markings are now the international regulatory model. September 11th made building evacuation safety vitally important, and our laws require high-rise office buildings to have photoluminescent strips on handrails, steps and perimeters of enclosed stairwells to facilitate safe evacuations. The International Code Council has embraced New York City's photoluminescence standards as its basis in the 2009 International Building Code.



The New NYC Construction Codes Team, July 2007

**CITY COUNCIL MEMBER JESSICA LAPPIN,  
MANHATTAN**

“ The Department of Buildings has made major strides in improving construction site safety since the two tragic crane collapses in 2008. I'm proud to have sponsored four pieces of signed legislation that give the Department powerful new tools to raise crane operation safety standards that will help prevent future tragedies. With active Buildings Department enforcement, we can ensure New York City construction sites are held to high standards to protect New Yorkers. ”



# SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

Improving construction safety requires an unwavering commitment from the industry and from our Department. Contractors must build safely and provide safe work environments for their workers, and our employees must perform their duties with diligence every day. We're fostering this relationship by raising New York City's construction safety standards – and strictly enforcing them.



## SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT PLAN

With the support of Mayor Bloomberg, Speaker Quinn, and Council Member Oddo, the Department was allocated \$12 million to implement its Special Enforcement Plan. Working closely, our Human Resources and Budget units dedicated 144 employees to nine new programs and one research group:

- Excavations Audit & Inspection Team
- Professional Certifications Review & Audits Team
- Special Enforcement Team
- Progress Inspection Monitoring Program
- Violation Re-Inspection Team
- Sidewalk Shed Electrical Safety Team
- After-Hours Inspection Team
- Interior Demolitions Team
- Low-Rise Site Safety Team
- Professional Certification Qualifications Group

These new Department teams are working together, enforcing safety standards and Building Code and Zoning Resolution compliance. Since the Plan's 2007 launch, these units have inspected 8,495 construction sites, identified approximately 85 individuals or companies for possible disciplinary action, reviewed or examined 6,246 professionally certified plans for code and zoning compliance, and issued 2,085 Stop Work Orders and 6,991 Environmental Control Board violations to sites citywide.



## SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT TEAM

Inspections Performed	2,428
Sites Inspected	1,292
Plans Audited	741
Plans Issued Objections	615

Data: 9/17/07 - 12/31/08

## SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT TEAM

Our multidisciplinary Special Enforcement Team identifies and pursues architects, engineers and contractors who blatantly disregard code and zoning regulations. Our Enforcement Team's attorneys, plan examiners, inspectors and support staff determine offenders' patterns of non-compliance and commence enforcement action against them. Since September 2007, our Special Enforcement Team has initiated investigations into more than 75 individuals or entities. In August 2008, the team began commencing actions at the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings to limit or revoke the filing privileges of various architects and engineers and to seek appropriate remedies against other bad actors. Our prosecutions have led to professional certification filing privileges being suspended, filing privileges being revoked and a rigger's license being suspended. We refer all disciplined architects and engineers to the State for further, appropriate action.

**CITY COUNCIL MEMBER DANIEL R. GARODNICK, MANHATTAN**

“More unannounced inspections on construction sites mean fewer chances for builders to break the rules. Expanding the Stop Work Order Patrol citywide is an important step toward the transformation of the Buildings Department from a reactive agency to a proactive one.”

November 1, 2007



### PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS REVIEW & AUDITS TEAM

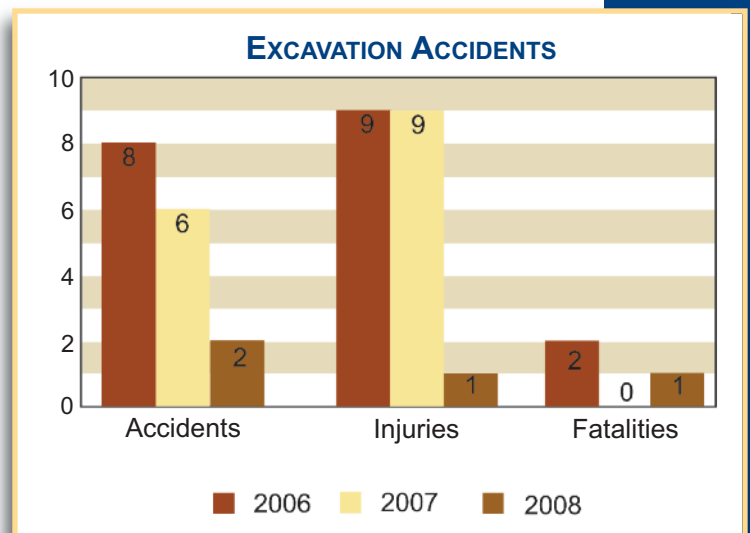
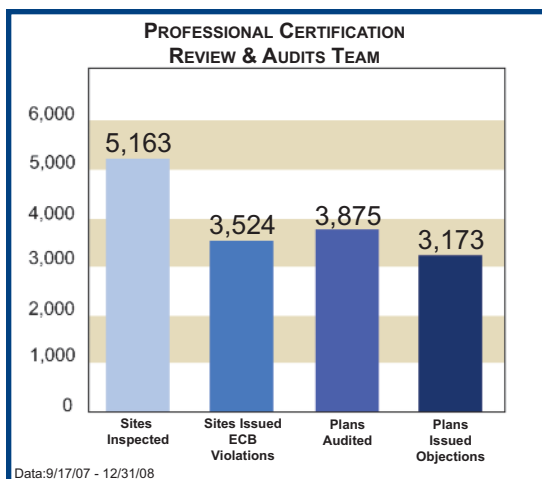
Registered architects and licensed professional engineers have the privilege of certifying that their submitted plans are code- and zoning-compliant. The Professional Certifications Team is restoring integrity to the Professional Certification Program by strategically auditing applications and inspecting job sites to enforce compliance. By identifying patterns of abuse, conducting in-depth audits of plans and recommending repeat offenders for discipline, Professional Certifications is making it clear that we will not permit abuse of the City's regulations.

### EXCAVATIONS AUDIT & INSPECTION TEAM

The highly specialized and trained inspectors and engineers on our Excavations Audit & Inspection Team make sure architects and engineers, Special Inspectors, general contractors and subcontractors are complying with Building Code-mandated rules and regulations. The Excavations Team verifies that: construction documents are adequately detailed; work conforms to approved construction documents; and construction is done properly and safely under the direction of the Special Inspectors and contractors. This team identifies areas prone to recurring problems, proactively inspects and takes enforcement action – all to protect workers, passers-by and adjacent properties.



EXCAVATIONS AUDITS & INSPECTIONS TEAM	
Inspections Performed	5,380
Sites Inspected	2,520
Violations Written	3,435
Sites Stopped	953
Data: 8/3/07 - 12/31/08	



# SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

Seeking new ways to raise the standard of care at New York's construction sites requires that our experts be out in force. To do this, we're partnering with other City agencies and educating the construction industry and its workers.



## Strengthening the Safety, Oversight and Coordination of Construction, Demolition and Abatement Operations

Report & Recommendations to  
Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg



Construction, Demolition & Abatement Working Group  
Deputy Mayor Edward Sklar, Chair  
July 2008

### CONSTRUCTION, DEMOLITION AND ABATEMENT: BUILDINGS, FDNY & DEP

The complex nature of construction, demolition and asbestos abatement operations demands that the three agencies regulating these activities coordinate their efforts. In response to the fatal fire at 130 Liberty Street in 2007, the Fire, Buildings and Environmental Protection Departments partnered to enhance regulation, oversight and safety. Mayor Bloomberg issued a comprehensive report, which outlines 33 safety recommendations for construction, demolition and abatement. Implementation is underway. In addition, in 2008 the Buildings Department began its enforcement effort against smoking on all construction and demolition sites.

### LIGHTWEIGHT MATERIAL INSPECTIONS: BUILDINGS & FDNY

The Buildings Department teamed with the Fire Department in 2007 to improve overall building safety. Buildings inspectors and FDNY ladder companies jointly inspect properties for structural integrity and flammable lightweight materials, and we coordinate action for fire protection plans and Place of Assembly Permits.



### STOP WORK ORDER PATROL & RESCISSION PROGRAM: BUILDINGS & FINANCE

Violating a Stop Work Order is a serious offense. We created the Stop Work Order Patrol in 2007 to ensure contractors comply with these orders. We've partnered our inspectors with NYC Department of Finance deputy sheriffs, and they conduct surprise inspections at Stop Work Order sites. When they find this illegal construction, they issue violations with escalated civil penalties. In 2008, the Patrol conducted more than 4,000 unannounced site visits. Also in 2008, the Department launched the Stop Work Order Rescission Program to improve communication between the Department and the construction industry: When the Department halts work, inspectors immediately contact the project executive or construction manager to outline the necessary steps to correct the safety hazard.

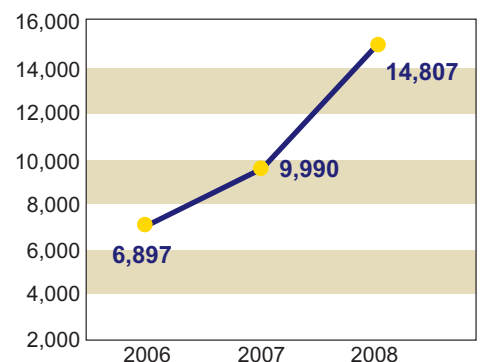


Training with FDNY at Randall's Island

LINDSAY EASON,  
NEW YORK CITY SHERIFF

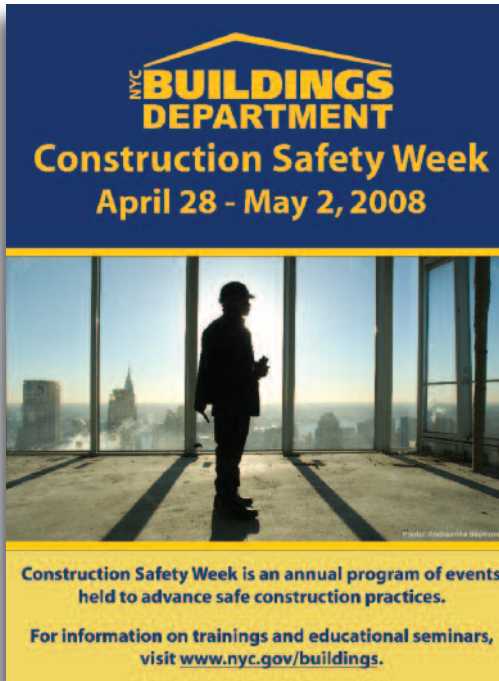
“Disobeying Stop Work Orders is a serious violation and will not be tolerated. We will do everything we can do as the City's chief civil enforcement officers to support Building inspectors and ensure that New York grows safely and responsibly.”

### Stop Work Orders Issued Citywide



Includes Full & Partial SWOs and Violations of SWOs





**NYC BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT**  
**Construction Safety Week**  
**April 28 - May 2, 2008**

Construction Safety Week is an annual program of events held to advance safe construction practices.

For information on trainings and educational seminars, visit [www.nyc.gov/buildings](http://www.nyc.gov/buildings).

#### SCAFFOLD SAFETY TEAM

In 2007, Mayor Bloomberg allocated new funds to create the Scaffold Safety Team, a unit dedicated to advancing scaffold safety through worker outreach and inspections. This unit proactively inspects sites with scaffolds, holds worker education programs, conducts enforcement sweeps, and responds to emergencies and complaints. In 2007 and 2008, the Scaffold Safety Team conducted 9,249 inspections, issued Stop Work Orders at 1,579 sites and issued 4,023 violations.

#### SAFETY HARNESS OUTREACH PROGRAM

Safety harnesses save lives by keeping construction workers from falling. To encourage safety, we created and launched a seven-language, citywide advertising campaign that tells workers they have a right to a safety harness and reminds them of the importance of using this safety equipment properly. In 2007 and 2008, the Department distributed approximately 150 free safety harnesses to workers.



Scaffold Safety Team demonstrates harness safety at a Bronx worker outreach event.

#### CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK

Each year, the Buildings Department leads Construction Safety Week to reinforce safe construction practices. We provide free educational seminars and outreach events for the industry, workers and public. The 2008 program focused on: concrete operations; excavations; crane operations; scaffold safety; gut renovations; demolitions; illegal conversions; and safety under the new NYC Construction Codes.



**IF YOU FALL, THEY FALL, TOO.**

Wear your safety harness. **NYC Buildings**



**Si usted cae, ellos también caen.**  
 Por qué debe engancharse a la seguridad

**如果你不幸墜落，他們也無法倖免。**  
 安全繫在身上。

**И ВЫ УПАДЕТЕ, И ТОЖЕ УПАДУТ**  
 И ВЫ ДОЛЖНЫ ЗАБОТИТЬСЯ О БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ.

**만약 당신이 추락하면 그들은도 추락합니다.**  
 안전을 기해야 합니다.

**اگر آپ گرے، تو وہ بھی گرے گی۔**  
 آپ کو حفاظتی بک سے کیوں جڑا ہونا چاہیے۔

**दे आप गिरे, वो भी गिरेंगे।**  
 सुरक्षा के हुक से क्यों जुड़ा होना चाहिए।

# SAFETY & ENFORCEMENT

The sheer size of New York City presents unique building challenges that require specific attention. We've created specialized programs to focus on complex, larger-scale projects and units dedicated to property use and maintenance issues. Together, they cover a wide range of concerns in New York City's neighborhoods.

## BUILDINGS ENFORCEMENT SAFETY TEAM

The Buildings Enforcement Safety Team – the BEST Squad – monitors high-rise construction sites and is forming the newly created low-rise unit to secure compliance with site safety regulations. In 2008, 286 new high-rise buildings were under construction or demolition, more than any other time in our City's history. BEST proactively monitors construction and demolition of buildings seven stories and higher. In 2008, BEST conducted 27,169 inspections.

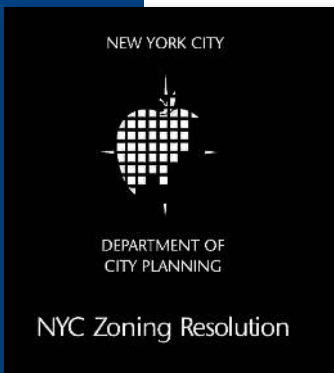
## ZONING REVIEW PROGRAM

To catch non-compliance early, our Zoning Review Program examines all professionally certified New Building and Alteration-1 applications for Zoning Resolution compliance before a permit is issued. In 73% of the reviewed applications, we would not issue a permit until applicants resolved objections. Concentrating on building envelope, required yards and setback issues, the Zoning Review Program enforces compliance with the City's Zoning Resolution.



## FALSE FILING LAW

Strengthening Department operations requires commitment from different segments of government, including the Mayor, the City Council and New York State. In 2007, State Assemblyman James Brennan and New York State Senator Frank Padavan introduced legislation that became the False Filing Law. This law empowers our Department to refuse to accept any filings from an individual who has been found, at a hearing, to have knowingly or negligently filed false documents with us. Using the False Filing Law, the Department has filed cases against five individuals for prosecution at the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings and has referred two other individuals for prosecution.







fotog/Tetra Images/Getty Images

#### ELEVATOR ENFORCEMENT: MAJOR OFFENDERS

Partnering with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, in 2007 we launched our Major Elevator Offenders program to pursue building owners who shirk their responsibility to maintain their elevators. By identifying buildings that have a history of elevator neglect and non-compliance, our inspectors and attorneys focus their resources and efforts to force owners to take corrective action. Through 2008, the Department monitored 131 buildings and successfully forced 121 to comply, including 68 owners who were held accountable in Criminal Court – a 93% success rate.



#### PADLOCK ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Illegal manufacturing and commercial activity in residential areas damages our neighborhoods' quality of life. Our Padlock Enforcement unit combats illegal commercial and manufacturing activity. In 2007, this enforcement unit compelled more than 150 groups to voluntarily stop their illegal work and halted illegal activity at another 20 locations by padlocking their doors. Padlock also successfully prosecuted 100% of its 66 cases before the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings in 2007. In 2008, OATH heard 52 Padlock cases and ruled for the Department in the 51 decisions rendered by press time. Also in 2008, this team padlocked 19 locations and compelled 82 groups to voluntarily discontinue operations. With the new NYC Construction Codes, the Padlock Law expanded to allow enforcement against certain manufacturing uses in low-density commercial areas within residential neighborhoods.





## INTEGRITY & SERVICE



As public servants, we remain steadfast in our commitment to infuse integrity within our ranks and into the construction industry. To this end, the Buildings Department has adopted the strictest standards of ethical conduct. We have a zero-tolerance policy for misconduct, a zero-dollar gift rule and mandatory, annual integrity training for all employees. In fact, in 2007 and 2008 we conducted a total 105 employee ethics trainings – averaging more than one per week in 2008. Fostering integrity is among our highest priorities, and each employee meeting our ethical standards is essential to our success as a team.

We have generated the greatest anti-corruption awareness in Department history. To reinforce integrity in the construction industry, we've distributed our

Code of Conduct to general contractors and filing representatives. We've also formalized our work with the Department of Investigation to advance our progress. BSIU – the Buildings Special Investigations Unit – works under the direct supervision of DOI, and the Department's Internal Audits and Discipline Unit coordinates with DOI closely.

Aggressively improving our services and technology is integral to making New York City construction safer and protecting our quality of life. Modernized service and technology create transparency. Transparency heightens accountability because contractors and property owners and licensees can't hide important information from New Yorkers and their communities.

**COMMISSIONER ROBERT D. LiMANDRI,  
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS**

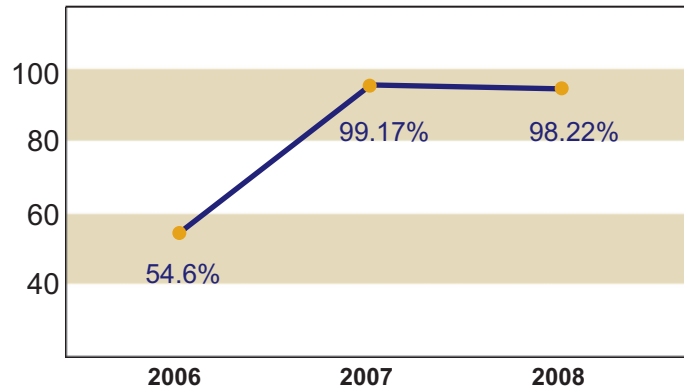
“I thank Department of Investigation Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn for her support as we work together to root out the individuals who undermine the hard work of our dedicated Buildings Department employees. I'm especially appreciative of DOI's criminal investigation of serious construction incidents and its even-handed approach, pursuing tips from our honest employees and arresting those who attempt to undermine our enforcement. These efforts have helped us further the integrity of our Agency and advance safety for all New Yorkers.”

# INTEGRITY & SERVICE BY THE NUMBERS

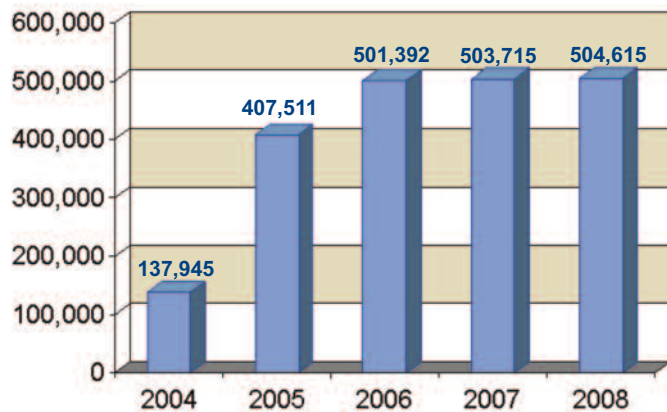


## MANDATORY INTEGRITY TRAINING

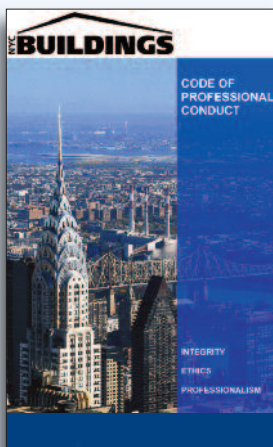
PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES IN COMPLIANCE



## DOB 311 INQUIRIES



## CODE OF CONDUCT



2004  
First Release



2006  
New Edition



2009  
In Development

# INTEGRITY & SERVICE

Fostering our ethical environment demands daily dedication. We've built a strong foundation by requiring integrity training for our teams, and we're using modern computer technology to ensure New Yorkers have access to our information – information they need to hold us accountable.

## ENHANCED DATA REPORTING

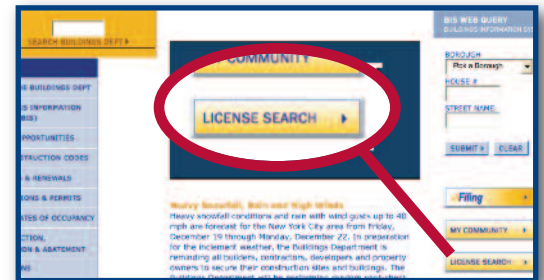
We're now providing New Yorkers with more information on the work in their neighborhoods through enhanced access to construction accident data. We launched these new, monthly reports in 2008, and they detail year-to-date construction-related injuries and fatalities. These reports include: property address; property owner; type of construction; Department enforcement action; and contractor name. This information is posted on our website for easy access.

## GENERAL CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION

Thanks to our partnership with City Council, in 2008 we implemented a mandatory registration program that better enables us to oversee general contractors who build one-, two- and three-family homes. This new registration requirement increases contractor accountability and helps shield homebuyers from poor quality construction. Contractors must provide homebuyers with a warranty that guarantees the structure will be free of certain defects for six years after construction is complete.

## MOBILE CRANE LICENSE OVERHAUL

The Department is better protecting New Yorkers by overhauling its Class C hoist machine licenses to demand heightened requirements, including work experience in a dense urban environment. We established these rules in 2008, and now new applicants seeking a license to operate a mobile crane must first show they're certified by the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators or an equivalent organization that develops performance assessments for safer crane operations nationwide.



## NEW INTERNET LICENSE SEARCH

New Yorkers have a right to know the professional standing of the contractors they hire, and in 2007 we launched a new tool to protect that right. The Department issues 30 different licenses and registrations, and we've made it easy to learn if contractors' licenses or registrations are active, what firm they're associated with and if they're in good standing with Buildings.

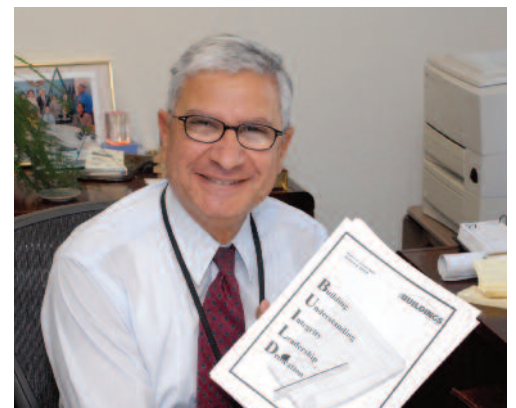
## THE BUILD PROGRAM

To scrutinize the quality and efficiency of our critical services, the Building Understanding, Integrity, Leadership, Dedication (BUILD) Program produces a monthly report that tracks and analyzes 100 indicators. BUILD targets problem areas and provides review of Agency productivity. Senior Department leadership holds monthly sessions with our borough commissioners, unit directors, division supervisors and office managers to examine performance data in a group setting. Managers must address variations in productivity and trends. In keeping with our commitment to transparency, the top ten BUILD indicators are accessible to the public on our website's home page.



**CITY COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES ODDO,  
STATEN ISLAND**

“Technology is the tool that will allow the Buildings Department to effectively and efficiently live up to its myriad of Charter-mandated responsibilities.”







### UNIFORMED FIELD TEAMS

For the first time in our history, our inspectors and field responders are fully uniformed. Our General Services unit issued mandatory uniforms in 2007 to further our Department's professionalism and integrity. Often, our inspectors and field responders are the only contact that owners, tenants and contractors have with the Buildings Department. These new uniforms help our team succeed in the field and reassure homeowners when opening their doors to allow our inspectors into their homes.

### QUALITY ASSURANCE APPLICATION AUDITS

Our auditors randomly check a portion of the submitted professionally certified documents to strengthen the integrity of the Professional Certification program. Our mandate is to audit 20% of these applications. In 2008, we exceeded that goal by auditing and performing zoning reviews on 32% of professionally certified applications. In addition, to catch non-compliance early, we created the Zoning Review Program to review all professionally certified New Building and Alteration Type 1 applications for common zoning infractions before the permit is issued. In 2007 and 2008, we conducted 6,688 zoning reviews.

### 2007 SHELDON OLIENSIS ETHICS AWARD

We have worked hard to strengthen our Department's ethical foundation, and in 2007 the City's Conflicts of Interest Board recognized our efforts by honoring us with the Sheldon Olien's Ethics in City Government Award. Since 2002, we have advanced ethical behavior and integrity at Buildings by forming a close partnership with the Department of Investigation, creating our first employee Code of Conduct and holding mandatory integrity trainings.



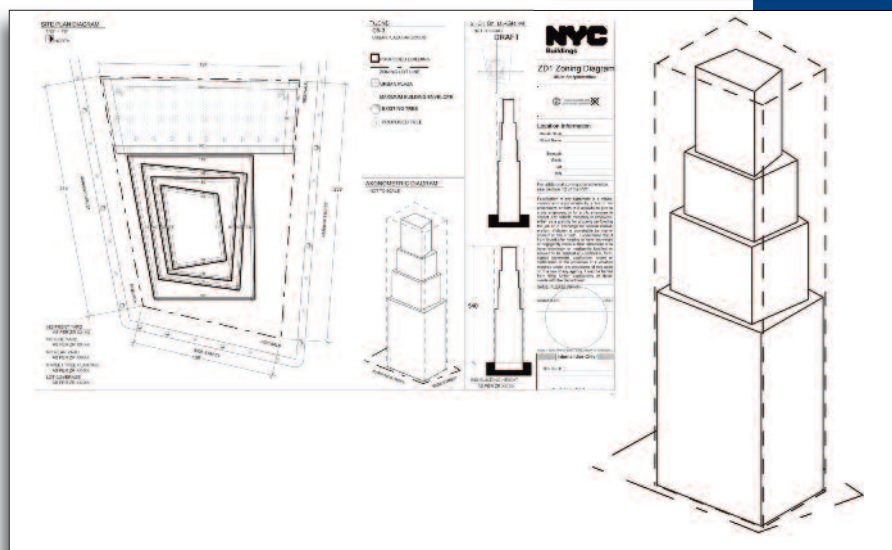
### BUILDINGS UNIVERSITY

We want our employees to succeed and help us maintain an accountable, transparent and professional Buildings Department. To support our team, our in-house training academy – Buildings University – now customizes classes to address specific needs. We provide ongoing training opportunities to improve our employees' technical expertise and standards of service. In 2008, Buildings University offered 484 classes that include programs addressing integrity, engineering and inspections, and effective management. Our Equal Employment Opportunity officer has also worked closely with Buildings University to incorporate essential mandatory trainings within our class schedule.



### NEW ZONING DIAGRAM INCREASES TRANSPARENCY

New York will be the first major U.S. city to provide online public access to diagrams illustrating the size and scale of approved new building projects and existing building enlargements – before construction begins. The Department is finalizing the new diagram filing requirement and is launching this milestone program in 2009. New Yorkers will be able to easily understand pending development in their communities, and they'll have access to it 24/7 on our website's Buildings Information System.



# INTEGRITY & SERVICE

Today's Buildings Department serves New Yorkers as never before: We catch construction application problems earlier through our electronic application filing system; we work with developers on high-rise zoning compliance even before they submit plans; and we're doing our share to help New York City become more sustainable.

## OPERATIONS REDESIGN

The critical component in improving our systems is our Operations Redesign team. Operations Redesign analyzes virtually every Department system, devising strategies to modernize or improve processes, implementing new legislation and policies and procedures, and facilitating interagency partnerships. In 2008, Operations Redesign worked to implement more than 100 agency improvement projects. Our Contracts & Purchasing and Budget & Fiscal units work with Operations Redesign to implement services essential to advancing the Agency's mission.

## MY COMMUNITY ONLINE

In 2007, we launched our My Community online search engine to provide New Yorkers with better access to information on major construction and full demolition applications filed in their neighborhoods. My Community is an extension of the Department's comprehensive online Buildings Information System, and it reached a new peak in 2008, with an average 7,630 page hits every month.



## SCANNING SYSTEM

To ensure New Yorkers have access to public information, we rebuilt our document management system and launched the Buildings Scan and Capture Network in 2007. B-SCAN enables us to electronically capture most construction application documents. Within minutes, we upload the submitted documents to our online Buildings Information System for easy public access. As we phase in this crucial advancement, our Records Management unit continues to work with the Agency to properly maintain, archive and retrieve essential documents.



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Serving our constituents demands that we do our part in achieving the Mayor's goal of reducing energy consumption by 30% by the year 2030, as outlined in PlaNYC. In 2007, Buildings published specific new requirements for applicants to demonstrate that they comply with the New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code. We began auditing applications centrally to identify problems. In 2009, our audit initiative will launch across the boroughs to track compliance and to revoke permits when applicants don't meet these requirements. Later in 2009, we will detail the third leg of our compliance program, establishing inspection standards for Energy Code compliance.

NYC Buildings My Community NYC.gov

Step 1: Identify Your Community Board

Choose one...

OR

Type Your Address Below

Step 2: What are you looking for in Your Community?

☐ New Buildings

☐ Major Alterations

☐ Full Demolitions

GO >>

CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ERIK MARTIN DILAN, CHAIRMAN  
HOUSING & BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

“The implementation of B-SCAN brings together greater efficiency and transparency to the incredible development going on Citywide. With B-SCAN, our communities can easily access critical information on major construction from their homes or offices. I applaud the Buildings Department for bringing B-SCAN to New Yorkers and for their latest effort in improving their operations.”





DoITT honors the B-SMART Team with its 2008 Excellence in Technology Award. November 2008

#### HIGH RISE TEAM

In 2007, we launched the High Rise Team to better facilitate the review, approval and sign off process of high-rise buildings. To best understand the scope of upcoming projects, these experienced plan examiners and inspectors begin their work even before project filing, enabling them to focus on the unique complexities this construction presents. Once permits are issued, our high-rise inspectors meet onsite with applicants to follow the progress of all construction, electrical and plumbing inspections and final approvals. In 2007 and 2008, the High Rise Team oversaw 92 high-rise projects.



#### MOST INNOVATIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications recently honored the Buildings Department with its Most Innovative Use of Technology Award for implementing our B-SMART application. B-SMART enables the quick compilation of data, including complaints, Stop Work Orders and violations from multiple data sources, enabling the Department to create accountability reports more effectively. B-SMART also supports our Program Management and Analysis team, which oversees the integrity of our collected data.

#### eFILING ELECTRONIC APPLICATION FILING

In 2008, we expanded our eFiling system to the tens of thousands of construction job applications filed with the Department each year. First implemented for electrical work applications, applicants may now use eFiling to create an account online and prepare nearly all required construction job forms electronically, reducing the in-office filing wait time. This latest modernization provides applicants with a guided, simplified way to create and manage job applications, reveals errors early on – and moves the Department toward an electronic, online application and permitting system.



# eFiling

## eFiling Launches on February 19th!

1

➡

2

➡

3



- Log in to eFiling account
- Prepare application or continue saved application



- Print application created by eFiling
- PE/RA signs and seals printed documentation



- Submit completed application to borough office
- Data is automatically uploaded from eFiling into BIS

## It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

**PAUL J. COSGRAVE, COMMISSIONER**  
DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

**“The Buildings Department's eFiling system for electrical permits earned our Best Application Serving the Public annual technology award by radically improving service to homeowners and residents in need of immediate electrical work, as well as for the industry that serves them. Consistent with the PlanIT goal of enhancing customer service by facilitating interaction with City government, eFiling reduces the electrical permit processing time from weeks to just minutes.”**



Andreanna Seymore

## 2009 & BEYOND

Two-thousand-nine will be an important year for the Buildings Department, marking the completion of our 2006 – 2009 Strategic Plan. The new and modernized NYC Construction Codes will become compulsory. Our Special Enforcement Plan will be fully implemented, strengthening our ability to hold repeat offenders of the City's codes and zoning regulations accountable. Many of our transparency and technology projects will be completed, making our services and information even more accessible to all New Yorkers. These advances are only possible with the daily dedication of our Buildings employees, who are working to re-engineer and streamline virtually every Department process with the ultimate goal of enforcing safe construction.

Construction safety begins and ends with all involved stakeholders. Property owners and contractors have the non-negotiable responsibility to maintain their properties and follow safe construction practices, and our enforcement teams – many launched or expanded in the last two years – are taking the lead in holding the industry accountable. Together, industry and government are partnering to protect the public and workers who build and maintain New York City.

Looking toward the future, we will continue to work with industry to raise construction safety standards and hold responsible parties to them – while increasing opportunities for construction savings and enabling innovative and sustainable design. We must, and we will. New York City depends upon us.

Robert D. LiMandri  
Commissioner









**MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG**  
**MAYOR**

**Robert D. LiMandri**  
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