



## THE TROUBLING STATE OF PUBLIC HOUSING REPAIRS

A Snapshot of New York City Housing Authority Data on Outstanding Work Order Requests

On January 31, 2013, NYCHA announced an initiative to “eliminate the entire backlog of outstanding repair requests by the end of 2013.” To ensure transparency and accountability in this undertaking, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio requested detailed record about NYCHA’s backlog of work order requests in February 2013. The analysis below is based on the result of this request – a list of 369,090 outstanding work order requests that was provided to the Public Advocate’s office on May 31, 2013. According to NYCHA, the data includes all outstanding work order requests as of February 15, 2013.

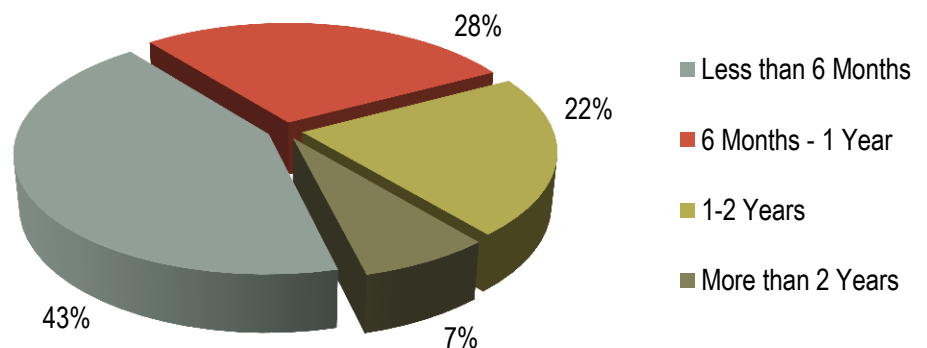
### The Long Wait for Repairs

➤ **The average NYCHA repair request has been outstanding for more than 9 months**

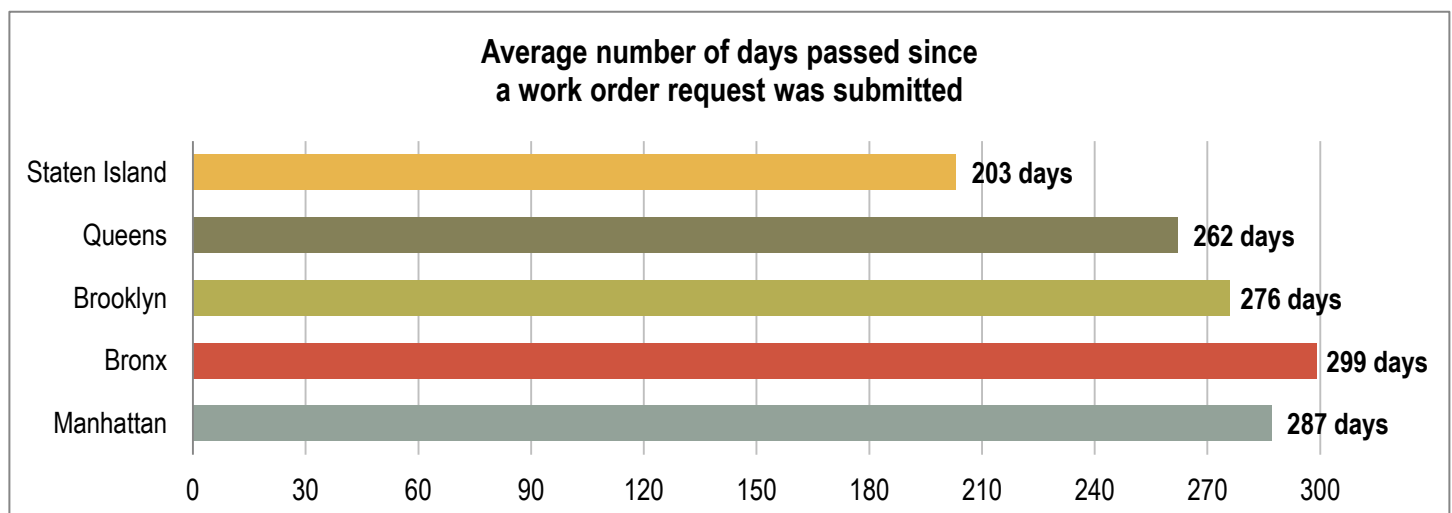
The average NYCHA work order request has been sitting for 282 days – more than nine months. As shown in the chart on the right, more than one-in-four outstanding requests (29%) were submitted more than a year ago.

Across the five boroughs, the average age of work order requests does not appear to vary dramatically. As indicated below, the average age of requests at NYCHA developments in the Bronx was highest at 299 days, while Staten Island had the lowest average at 203 days.

**Average amount of time passed since a work order request was submitted**



**Average number of days passed since a work order request was submitted**



➤ **5,000 work order requests have been outstanding for more than three years**

For some NYCHA residents, the wait for repairs has dragged on for multiple years. Six of the top ten most overdue work order requests are in one development, Woodside Houses, where tenants have been waiting for more than five years to have their floors repaired. 25 of the top 50 most overdue work order requests are in either Woodside Houses in Queens or Melrose Houses in the Bronx.

Development Name	Address	Description	Date Reported	Days Outstanding
Woodside Houses	50-25 Newtown Road, Queens	Floor	1-7-2007	2,230
Woodside Houses	50-07 Broadway, Queens	Floor	5-4-2007	2,113
Woodside Houses	50-17 Broadway, Queens	Floor	5-9-2007	2,108
Woodside Houses	50-48 Broadway, Queens	Floor	5-11-2007	2,106
Woodside Houses	49-15 Broadway, Queens	Floor	8-16-2007	2,009
Woodside Houses	31-49 49 <sup>th</sup> Street, Queens	Floor	8-31-2007	1,994
Ravenswood Houses	34-15 12 <sup>th</sup> Street, Queens	Floor	3-5-2008	1,807
Ravenswood Houses	13-06 34 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Queens	Floor	3-11-2008	1,801
Wagner Houses	10 Paladino Avenue, Manhattan	Paint	4-23-2008	1,758
Vladeck Houses	668 Water Street, Manhattan	Bathtub Shower	6-2-2008	1,718

**Questionable Priorities**

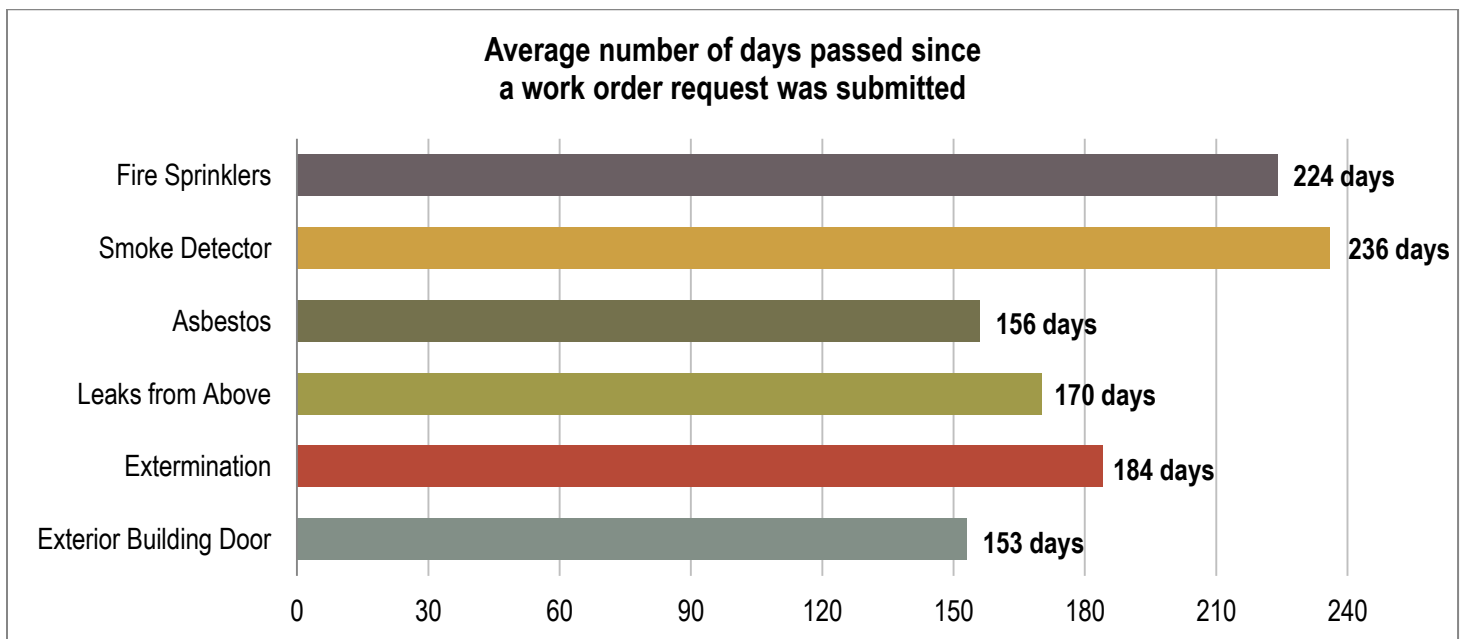
➤ **Work order requests for areas of serious concerns are also delayed for years at a time**

Under the New York City Housing Maintenance Code, traditional land lords are required to fix “immediately hazardous” Class C building violations within 24 hours. These violations include lack of heat and hot water, rodents, peeling lead paint, defective faucets, and inadequate fire exits. Failure to comply can result in steep penalties from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development: \$50 per violation per day for buildings with 5 or fewer units or \$50 to \$150 per violation, plus \$125 per violation per day for buildings with more than five units. NYCHA residents, however, are not protected by these regulations and



can, according to NYCHA data, wait for months and even years for serious violations to be addresses. The chart below, for example, lists the ten most overdue work order requests for lead removal – all of which have been have been outstanding for more than one year. **If NYCHA was subject to the same penalties as traditional landlords, these ten outstanding repairs might have cost the agency more than \$1.3 million in penalties.**

Development Name	Address	Description	Date Reported	Days Outstanding
Isaacs Houses	419 East 93rd Street, Manhattan	Lead	2-05-2010	1,105
Whitman Houses	102 Cumberland Walk, Brooklyn	Lead	5-04-2010	1,017
Roosevelt Houses	128 Lewis Avenue, Brooklyn	Lead	11-15-2010	822
Cypress Hills	2525 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn	Lead	1-26-2011	750
Johnson Houses	165 East 112th Street, Manhattan	Lead	2-15-2011	730
Johnson Houses	165 East 112th Street, Manhattan	Lead	2-15-2011	730
Johnson Houses	1840 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan	Lead	3-17-2011	700
Johnson Houses	1840 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan	Lead	3-18-2011	699
Jefferson Houses	325 East 112th Street, Manhattan	Lead	4-12-2011	674
344 East 28th Street	344 East 28th Street, Manhattan	Lead	8-19-2011	545



## **Wide Discrepancies in Outstanding Repairs by NYCHA Development**

### ➤ **Repair backlog and wait times can vary by 2-3 times at nearby developments**

Whereas nearly all of NYCHA's developments suffer from a large backlog of work order requests and long wait times for repairs, individual housing developments can vary significantly. The map below, for example, illustrates three developments on the west side of Harlem – Grant Houses, Manhattanville, and Saint Nicholas Houses – located within two blocks of each other. All three developments were built in the same time period and contain more than 1,000 apartments. Yet despite these similarities, data on outstanding work order requests demonstrates significant differences in the management and conditions at these developments. Grant Houses has 6,203 outstanding requests, an average of 3.2 work order requests per apartment. Across the street, Manhattanville has 1,568 outstanding work order requests (an average of 1.2 requests per apartment) and the average time that work order requests have been waiting is roughly five months less than Grant Houses.



## NYCHA Housing Developments with the highest number of Outstanding Work Order Requests

Development & Neighborhood	Outstanding work order requests	Average # outstanding requests per apartment	Average # of days that repairs have been waiting
<b>Grant Houses</b>			
Harlem, Manhattan	6,203	3.2	344
<b>Baruch Houses</b>			
Lower East Side, Manhattan	5,743	2.6	328
<b>Van Dyke Houses</b>			
Brownsville, Brooklyn	5,723	3.6	326
<b>Smith Houses</b>			
Lower East Side, Manhattan	5,438	2.9	285
<b>Louis H. Pink Houses</b>			
East New York, Brooklyn	4,869	3.2	329