



ANNUAL REPORT 2009



BUILDINGS BY THE NUMBERS

Buildings	975,000
Employees	1,159
Inspectors	366
Plan Examiners	190
Borough Offices	5

2009 AT A GLANCE

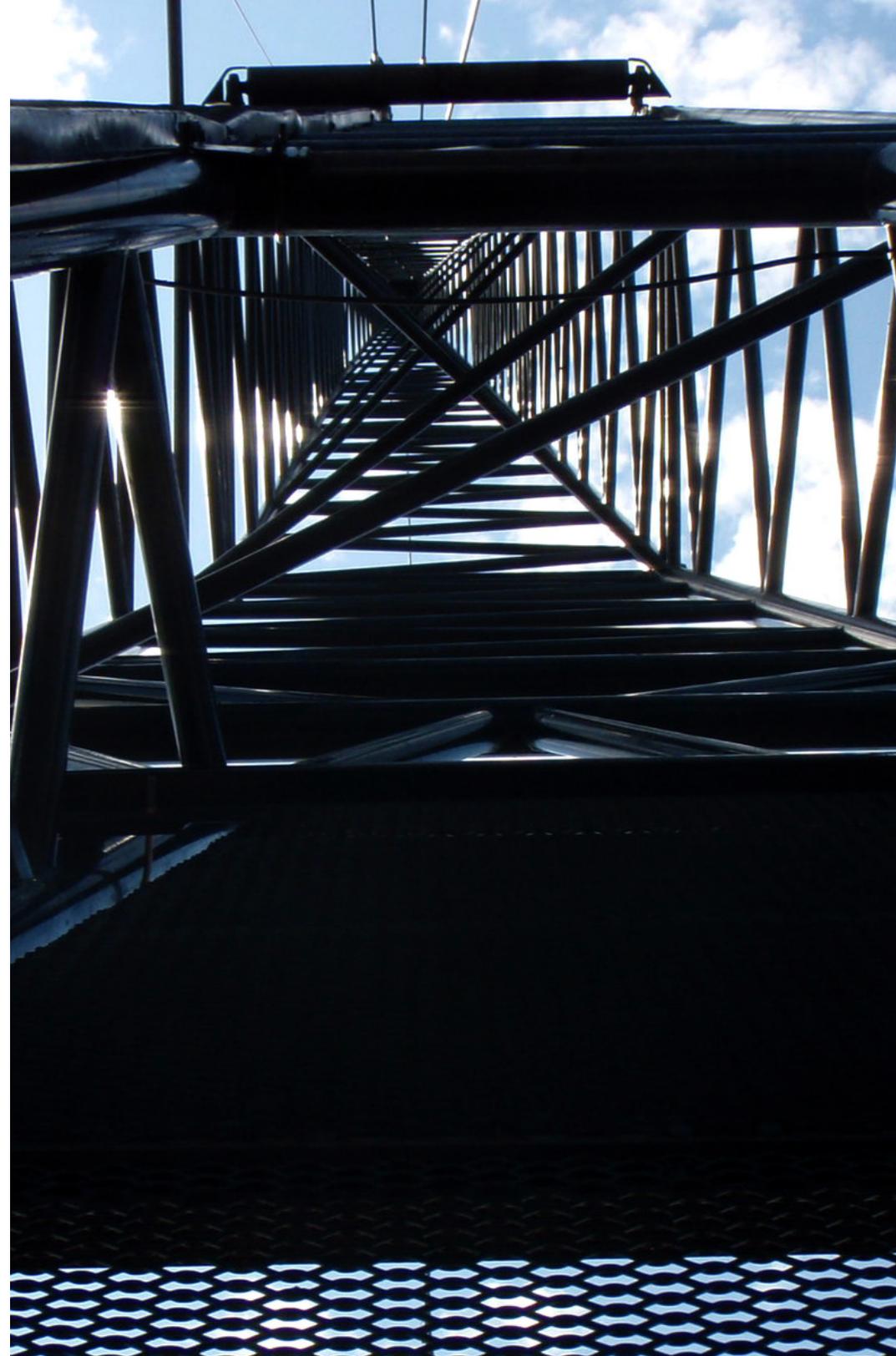
311 Calls	492,200
Plan Reviews	440,110
Inspections	413,981
Construction Permits	113,566
Violations	63,624
Licenses & Registrations	16,445
Stop Work Orders	10,009
Certificates of Occupancy	8,394
New Building Applications	2,404

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NYC[™] Buildings

2009 ANNUAL REPORT





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

April 2010

Dear Friends:

Together, we have made New York City the safest big city in the United States. In 2009 we achieved record low crime levels, had the fewest civilian fire deaths in history, and saw construction-related fatalities drop by 84%.

Through innovative safety initiatives that target high-risk operations and encourage worker and public protection, the Department of Buildings is working with members of the construction industry to embrace higher safety standards. New safety laws tailored to specific dangers – coupled with increased enforcement and enhanced industry communication – have made construction sites safer than ever before.

These difficult economic times have presented new challenges to the construction industry, but facilitating safe construction is essential to the economic future of our City. New initiatives launched by the Department of Buildings – including the Stalled Sites Program and the Stop Work Order Rescission Program – encourage contractors and developers to follow new safety standards so that they can resume work as quickly as possible. These ideas complement our economic stimulus programs, which include the Development Coordinator Initiative, Business Express, and the New Business Acceleration Team.

Implementing the right strategies now will help to secure our future success. In 2009 more than 45 million visitors recognized that New York City is the place to be – making our town the number one tourist destination in the country. By working with the private sector, we will continue to improve the City's safety, economy, and quality of life – encouraging more people to visit, start a business, or build a life.

Sincerely,

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

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

April 2010



Dear Fellow New Yorkers:

Construction fuels New York City's economic engines, but this work's inherent risk requires that it be performed as safely as possible. The Department of Buildings must be agile to effectively regulate as safety trends develop, public concerns evolve and economic forces shift. In 2009, the Department worked closely with industry members and other City agencies to improve job site safety. This focus reduced construction-related fatalities by 84%, a remarkable achievement by any measure.

The economic slowdown this past year has provided us with an opportunity to focus on safe practices – while still prioritizing economic development and environmental initiatives. Using our High-Risk Construction Oversight Study as a blueprint for safer standards, we have begun implementing the report's 66 recommendations to improve concrete, excavations, and crane and hoist operations. Moreover, since construction can be critical to launching or expanding a business, we have responded to Mayor Bloomberg's call to assist the business community with creative programs, such as the urbanSHED International Design Competition. Thanks to the Mayor's Greener Greater Buildings Plan, we are also working to ensure New York City leads the nation in cutting the carbon emissions that our buildings generate.

This past year marked an important milestone at the Department, as we conducted more industry and public outreach than ever before. We launched a citywide worker safety campaign and distributed thousands of flyers warning residents of the dangers in illegal housing. These efforts – supplemented by increased enforcement and 25 new construction safety laws since 2008 – heightened jobsite safety awareness and reduced fatalities from 19 in 2008 to three in 2009.

We have strived to raise the industry's standards – while raising our own. For example, last year we began tracking the on-duty locations of inspectors by using GPS technology to ensure they reach their assignments.

Reading the 2009 Annual Report, you will learn how our stronger enforcement, increased accountability and innovative programs are better protecting New Yorkers. In 2010, we are continuing these important efforts to ensure the foundation of this City remains solid and its future shines bright.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert D. LiMandri". The signature is fluid and cursive.

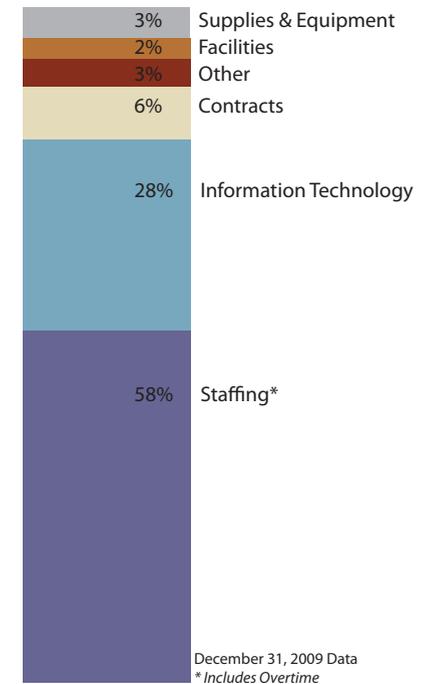
Robert D. LiMandri
Commissioner
New York City Department of Buildings

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Department of Buildings serves New Yorkers in more ways than most people can imagine. In addition to reviewing construction plans, issuing permits, inspecting sites, responding to emergencies and investigating accidents, we also help other City agencies succeed. The Department's engineers and architects advise firefighters regarding unstable buildings. Plan examiners determine whether architectural drawings meet Parks Department rules, which will bring 1,000,000 new trees to the City. Our Emergency Response Team works with police officers to verify that New Yorkers can safely evacuate nightclubs. Moreover, the Department's smoke and carbon monoxide detector requirements and electrical, gas and boiler standards have helped reduce fire fatalities to an all-time low.

We perform our duties with 1,159 employees – dedicated inspectors, architects, engineers, plan examiners, attorneys and support staff. This Annual Report details our service to New Yorkers in 2009.

Agency Spending



Revenues and Expenses

Agency Resources	FY05	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09
Expenditures (\$ mill.)*	\$ 64.3	\$ 81.5	\$ 87.2	\$ 99.4	\$ 111.0
Revenues (\$ mill.)	\$ 114.4	\$ 124.5	\$ 133.0	\$ 152.9	\$ 146.9
Budgeted Personnel	979	1,093	1,181	1,240	1,227

* Expenditures do not include fringe benefits.



Commissioner LiMandri at City Hall with Deputy Mayor Edward Skyler, Deputy Mayor Robert C. Lieber and Mayor Bloomberg, February 2009.



Werner deFoe, RA
Acting Bronx Borough Commissioner



Thomas Farrell, RA
Brooklyn Borough Commissioner



Ira Gluckman, RA
Queens Borough Commissioner



Marshall Kaminer, PE
Staten Island Borough Commissioner

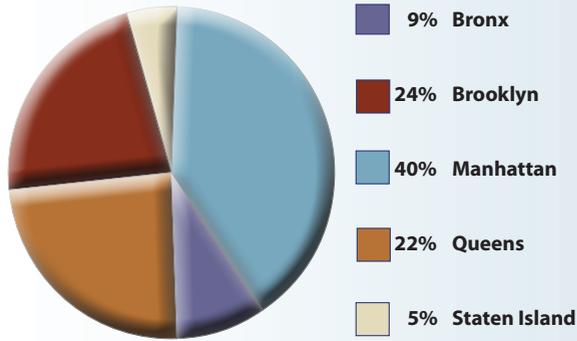


Derek Lee, RA
Manhattan Borough Commissioner

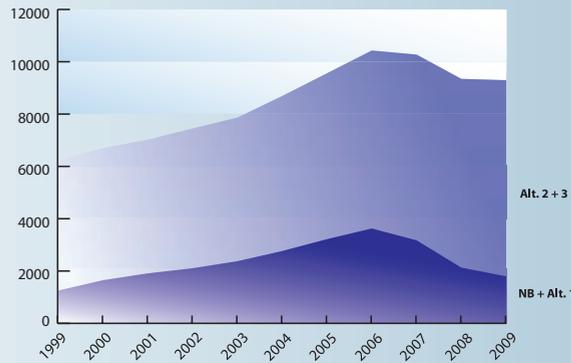
CONSTRUCTION BY THE BOROUGH

While the Department issued 28% fewer new building work permits in 2009 than 2008, demand for smaller-scale construction continued. The Department issued 135,854 total permits in 2009, approximately 10% percent below 2008's total. This has allowed us to focus on new safety initiatives.

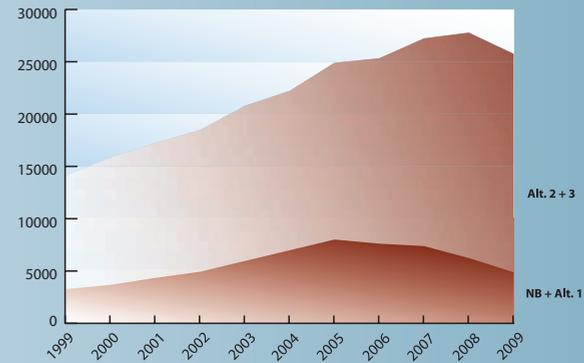
2009 Permits Issued



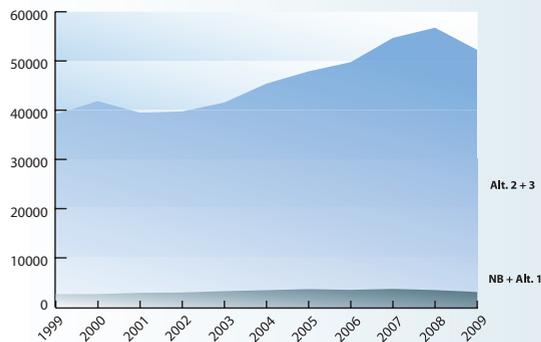
Bronx



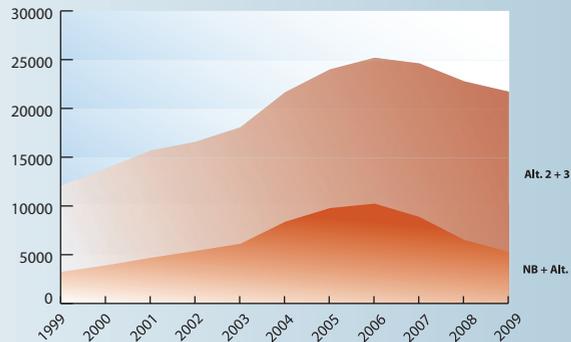
Brooklyn



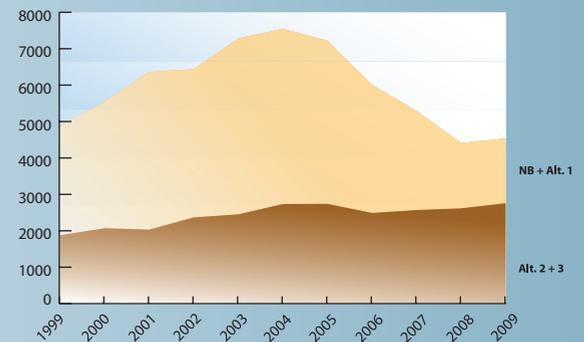
Manhattan



Queens



Staten Island



NB permits are for new buildings. Alt. 1 permits apply to larger construction projects. Alt. 2 + 3 permits are for smaller-scale projects.



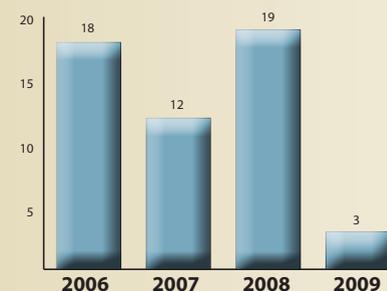
First Deputy Commissioner Fatma M. Amer, PE, during a February 2010 site visit.

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

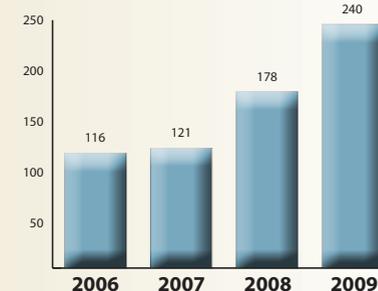
Construction is vital to New York City's future. It maintains our aging infrastructure, boosts the economy and responds to housing demand. In 2009, we proved that safe development is possible. While any construction fatality is too many, fatalities have been reduced significantly – from 19 in 2008 to three in 2009.

Though challenging economic times have slowed down construction, more contractors, developers, architects and engineers are incorporating safety measures as a key part of their projects – making New York an even safer city.

Construction-Related Fatalities



Construction-Related Injuries



Our inspection teams are witnessing new attention to construction safety – and some sites are taking steps beyond what is required. Several high-rise contractors are voluntarily cocooning their construction sites to keep debris from falling. Site managers are posting the Department's safety harness banners and posters, reminding their workers to wear their fall-prevention equipment. Moreover, site safety managers are attuned to more minor slips and trips, reporting more overall injuries than in the past.

Challenge: Identifying Construction Trends and Targeting Resources

Increased oversight, stronger enforcement and tailored laws protect New Yorkers best when they are driven by hard data, not anecdotes. Access to reliable information on accident trends is critical to improving New York City's construction safety.

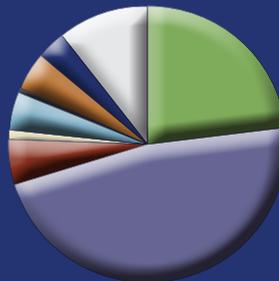
Challenge: Improving High-Risk Construction Safety

New York City's cavernous streets and remarkably developed land pose unique risks in high-rise construction and excavations. Our engineers and analysts identified three operations that pose the greatest risk to people and property: concrete; excavations; and cranes and hoists. These demand skilled planning and execution.

Solution: Data Analysis and B-SMART Technology

The Department of Buildings maximizes its manpower by combining traditional data analysis with advanced computer technology. When Department experts respond to complaints and emergencies and investigate incidents and accidents, they evaluate conditions and record details, which are incorporated into specific databases. B-SMART – Buildings' Strategic Metrics and Reporting Technology – collects and organizes information from multiple sources. This gives Department leadership easy-to-access, coherent snapshots of evolving trends – information that's key to allocating resources to areas with the greatest need.

2009 Accident Causes



49	Material Fell
103	Worker Fell
12	Scaffold/Shoring Installations
2	Crane Equipment
10	Mechanical Construction Equipment
1	Excavation/Soil Work
10	Electrical Work
7	Site Protection
23	Miscellaneous
Total: 217	

Solution: High-Risk Construction Oversight Study

With systematic field analyses, the High-Risk Construction Oversight Study provided an unprecedented understanding of concrete, excavations, and crane and hoist operations. We adopted the study's 66 safety recommendations, which all have short-, medium- and long-term milestones. In 2009, the Department's improvements in these high-risk areas included:

- Heightened special inspector and concrete testing lab training for Concrete Unit inspectors;
- Strengthened excavation notifications to include underpinning;
- A tower crane data-sharing partnership with Chicago and Philadelphia; and
- Testimony before OSHA, emphasizing the necessity of City crane safety regulations.



Assistant Commissioner of Engineering and Emergency Operations Michael Alacha, PE, served as a technical advisor in the HRCO study.



Challenge: Improving Concrete Safety and Oversight

The Construction Codes require contractors to have a licensed testing laboratory test their concrete to confirm the mixture's actual strength matches the project's design requirements. The Manhattan District Attorney's indictment and conviction of a major concrete testing firm raised concerns about the concrete at dozens of buildings. It became critical to determine that these buildings were not in imminent danger and to prevent false tests in the future.

Solution: Comprehensive Concrete Testing Oversight

The Department launched an expansive program to strengthen concrete oversight and see that testing companies follow proper procedures. For example, concrete must be able to withstand up to 250,000 pounds of force during compression testing. Three initiatives are underway to strengthen oversight of the concrete industry:

- **City Concrete Testing Laboratory:** The Department of Buildings is independently auditing concrete at construction sites and will use the Department of Design and Construction's lab, once built.
- **Concrete Unit:** This new team is reviewing the work of each Department-licensed lab and is rejecting license renewals based upon their inspections.
- **Re-testing Concrete Sites:** The Department worked with more than 50 engineers and concrete experts to develop an appropriate protocol to re-test the concrete of an entire building. Nearly 100 construction sites cited in the recent concrete testing criminal case are under the City's jurisdiction, and they must all comply with this new protocol.



Director of Engineering for Technical Affairs Gus Sirakis, PE, explains concrete accident trends, February 2009.

Challenge: Furthering Safety Awareness

The Department of Buildings is raising safety and operational standards, and construction companies must be willing participants in making building sites safer for New Yorkers. Safer construction depends upon the industry knowing about safety regulations and contractors' consistent compliance with them.

Challenge: Improving Training Qualifications and Tracking Safety Performance

Most organizations strengthen their workforce with on-the-job training, but mistakes on a jobsite can lead to serious injuries. Proper worker training is integral to safe construction practices – and a safer New York City.

Solution: Construction Industry Education and Outreach

Department experts regularly educate industry groups on evolving safety trends and new regulations. For example, our Office of Technical Certification and Research outlines new concrete testing protocols for architects and engineers, the Licensing Unit explains new training requirements to licensees and registrants, and we give extended presentations at larger-scale industry meetings throughout the year. In addition, twice each month the Department highlights important changes in Buildings News – our electronic newsletter that's emailed to 20,000 subscribers.



Department experts outlined safety trends and precautions at McGraw-Hill Construction's BUILD-Safe Conference, February 2009.



Solution: New Licensing Standards and Contractor Registration

Workers must have formal training plus hands-on work experience to build safely. In 2009, the Department raised training standards and expanded tracking to better monitor licensee and registrants' safety records across multiple jobsites. For example:

- Class C Hoisting Machine Operator applicants must have a national certification;
- Welders must prove New York State or American Welder Society certification; and
- Individuals and organizations performing or supervising major construction must have a Safety Registration Number.

The Department also made the licensing process easier for applicants by extending some license terms and creating an online application for journeyman registration.



Licensing Director Danielle Grillo outlines new standards at McGraw-Hill Construction's BUILD-Safe Conference, February 2009.



Commissioner LiMandri discusses construction site safety with contractors, April 2009.

Challenge: Protecting People and Neighboring Property During Excavations

Because New York City has little undeveloped land, constructing a new building almost always requires great care and attention to neighboring property. Without proper underpinning, adjacent buildings' foundations can be destabilized. Plus, sidewalks, structures and soil can collapse if contractors do not support them with sufficient sheeting, shoring and bracing.

Solution: Excavation Audits, Inspections and Outreach

The Department of Buildings is elevating the construction industry's quality of work, and in 2009 approximately 650 architects, engineers, developers, contractors and filing representatives attended the Excavations Unit's presentations on best practices. The Department is demanding more detailed, site-specific excavation plans, and our team is seeing higher quality drawings, receiving more requests for our expertise and observing better monitoring during critical operations. Stopping unsafe excavations is also raising the bar: After we have issued a Stop Work Order and audited the design plans, the engineer typically submits better and more detailed drawings for the next job.

Our experts are also observing better safety awareness, which is supported by a significant decline in accidents since the Unit's 2007 launch. While this trend can be attributed, in part, to the slowed economy, our increased enforcement, consistent industry outreach and strengthened regulations under the 2008 Construction Codes are yielding these positive results.



Excavations Unit Director Robert D'Alessio outlines key safety steps during a Construction Safety Week panel discussion, April 2009.

SNAPSHOT: Excavation/Soil Work Safety

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Accidents	8	6	2	1
Injuries	9	9	1	1
Fatalities	2	0	1	0

Challenge: Coordinating Inter-Agency Oversight of Complex Work

The Department of Buildings, Department of Environmental Protection and Fire Department are the three agencies that primarily regulate construction, demolition and asbestos abatement operations. Depending upon the nature of the work, building owners and contractors must receive permits from and be inspected by a combination of these three agencies.

Challenge: Improving Overall Construction Safety

Construction trends evolve with shifting market forces, improved technology and new safety laws. It is crucial that the architects and engineers who design and oversee construction – and the contractors who bring their visions to completion – remain aware of new risks and safety regulations to prevent problems.

Solution: Increased Construction, Demolition and Abatement Safety Requirements

Mayor Bloomberg appointed Deputy Mayor Edward Skyles to lead the Construction, Demolition and Abatement Working Group, and the Department of Buildings participated in this multi-agency effort to propose new safety standards. Together, we generated 33 recommendations that led to new safety requirements, including:

- The Asbestos Technical Review Unit;
- Color-coded standpipes and sprinkler piping;
- Advance notification for partial demolitions; and
- A codified smoking prohibition on all construction sites.



Since the Department's August 2008 regulatory notice banning smoking at construction sites, inspectors have issued 1,190 violations for smoking.

Solution: Annual Construction Safety Week

The Department of Buildings hosted its Fifth Annual Construction Safety Week – a week-long event that brings Department experts and the construction industry together to focus on key safety issues. During 2009's Safety Week, the Department:

- Distributed safety harnesses to workers;
- Outlined construction, demolition and asbestos abatement regulation recommendations;
- Discussed new licensing requirements for Class C hoisting machine operators; and
- Explained the High-Risk Construction Oversight Study findings.

We expanded the 2009 event with 25 speakers at 14 seminars and trainings, plus construction site visits in all five boroughs.





Challenge: Protecting Workers from Falls

Worker falls represented 47% of 2009's construction-related accidents and two of the three fatalities. While some workers need additional training in how to properly use safety harnesses, others don't know that they have a right to this equipment or they're afraid to demand it from their employers. Plus, experience on the job also brings risk: Skill can lead to complacency.

Solution: Worker Safety Harness Campaign

The seven-language Safety Harness Campaign helps protect construction workers, from day laborers doing low-rise façade work to union workers on high-rise jobs. The message – “If You Fall, They Fall, Too” – emphasizes a family's loss from a construction fatality. We translated the safety guides into Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu and created posters, banners and brochures. In our mass distribution, we targeted schools, workers and managers at construction sites, industry meetings and worker outreach events.

The industry began requesting additional copies, and our teams are seeing better awareness of safety in the field than ever before.

SNAPSHOT: If You Fall, They Fall, Too

7	Languages
350	Banners
1,500	Posters
3,000	Surveys
20,000	Pamphlets



Challenge: Protecting New Yorkers from Dangerous Living Conditions

Strong housing demand – coupled with the difficult economy – can tempt some property owners to illegally build bedrooms and sleep areas. Typically, these illegal conversions are unsafe: They do not meet the Construction or Fire Codes’ basic safety requirements. Too often, renters are not aware of the danger. Overloaded extension cords can ignite a fire, and illegal housing units often have no easy way out in an emergency.

Solution: Living Safely Campaign

The more people know, the safer they’ll be. Therefore, the Department created the Living Safely Campaign that explains to New Yorkers how to spot an illegal room, why to avoid them – and how to protect themselves if they’re living in one. To reach the most people, we translated the guide into 10 languages and targeted neighborhoods with the highest number of illegal conversion complaints. Volunteers from the Fire Department joined more than 100 Buildings employees at subway entrances and bus stops in all five boroughs – early in the morning and in the evening – to distribute the flyers to commuters and passersby. To reinforce the campaign, we advertised the message in 15 newspapers for three weeks, with a weekly circulation of 100,000.



SNAPSHOT: Living Safely	
3	Weeks
5	Boroughs
11	Languages
25	Distribution Sites
104	Department Volunteers
64,500	Flyers

Challenge: Keeping Children Safe in Elevators

With 58,042 passenger and freight elevators and 2,283 escalators in New York City, this equipment is a standard – and safe – part of our lives. Decades of improved technology have minimized risk so much that few people know the danger in using these machines incorrectly. For example, many people’s first instinct is to pry elevator doors open when they get stuck – which is the most dangerous thing to do. The rarity of elevator malfunctions means many parents forget to teach their children what to do if something goes wrong.

Solution: Safe-T Kat Elevator and Escalator Safety Program



In 2009, we expanded our annual elevator and escalator safety program by visiting 13 schools and teaching more than 2,000 first, second and third graders how to stay safe.

The Safe-T Kat mascot helped our Elevator Unit experts instruct children to do three things if they get stuck in an elevator: ring, relax and wait. Anyone who gets stuck should ring the alarm, relax because help is on the way, and wait without trying to open the doors. The program was so popular in 2009 that elementary school principals began calling the Department to be included in the program.



Safe-T Kat teaches PS 019 students in Brooklyn to “ring, relax and wait” if they ever get stuck in an elevator, November 2009.



Now is the time



Commissioner LiMandri at McGraw-Hill's BUILDSafe Conference, February 2009.

ENFORCEMENT

Safer construction means a safer New York City. While many contractors are prioritizing safety, others need stronger laws and stricter enforcement to comply. With new safety regulations and new enforcement programs, the Department is improving construction safety and New Yorkers' quality of life.

We thank Mayor Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Housing and Buildings Committee Chairman Erik Martin Dilan for enhancing the Department's oversight and enforcement power to meet today's safety concerns. With these modernized laws and ongoing enforcement, safe development can keep New York great.

2009 Safety, Sustainability and Quality of Life Laws

New local laws passed and signed in 2009 enhance construction, demolition and asbestos abatement safety, as well as improve New York City's sustainability and quality of life.

LOCAL LAWS IMPROVING SAFETY

06/09	Project Site Safety Monitors	58/09	Standpipe/Sprinkler Color Coding
08/09	Safety Registration Numbers	59/09	Standpipe Inspection
35/09	Asbestos Abatement Smoking Prohibition	60/09	Standpipe/Sprinkler Cutting & Capping
36/09	Construction & Demolition Smoking Prohibition	63/09	Standpipe/Sprinkler Pressure Testing
37/09	Asbestos Abatement Permitting	64/09	Standpipe Pressurized Alarms
38/09	Egress Enhancements	70/09	Stalled Sites Safety Program
39/09	Abatement Notification & Data Sharing	71/09	Vent Piping
57/09	Handheld Tool Demolition	77/09	Asbestos Abatement & Demolition

LOCAL LAWS IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

27/09	Brownfields Remediation	76/09	Plumbing Backflow Prevention
32/09	Special Nature Area Tree Removal	84/09	Energy & Water Use Benchmarking
51/09	Garage Parking for Bicycles	85/09	NYC Energy Conservation Code
52/09	Office Building Bicycle Access	87/09	Energy Audits & Retro-commissioning
75/09	Improved Retail Gates	88/09	Lighting and Electrical Upgrades

Challenge: Improving Overall Construction Safety and Updating Penalties for Violations

For nearly 40 years, construction safety standards were improved with ad hoc amendments to the 1968 Building Code. While these changes addressed specific arising needs, their piecemeal nature undermined the Code's coherence. Over time, the 1968 Code couldn't easily support modernized technology, improved materials or once-unimaginable safety needs.

Solution: New NYC Construction Codes

In 2009, the new NYC Construction Codes became mandatory for all new buildings in New York City. These new laws represent the first complete overhaul of the 1968 Code, and they meet the modern needs of New York's dense urban environment.

To strengthen compliance, the Department increased penalties for violations by 20% across the board, though some areas required substantially greater increases. For example, to protect the public from falling debris, we increased the average penalty for failing to install a required sidewalk shed by 252%, to \$8,186. The new multiple violation classification system is also more equitable: It gives inspectors new flexibility, so violations better reflect site conditions.

SNAPSHOT: New Construction Codes

Safer Exit Stairwells
Increased Sprinkler Systems
Enhanced Structural Safety
Expanded Emergency Voice Communications
Reclassified Violations Focusing on Risk
Heightened Penalties for Code Violations
New Construction Work Safeguards
Increased Compliance Inspections

Challenge: Enabling Safe Construction to Resume More Quickly

Department of Buildings inspectors halt construction when they find dangerous conditions. In some cases contractors are able to quickly correct the issues. With today's economic challenges, the Department understands how important it is for crews to get back to work without delay once it's safe to do so.

Solution: Stop Work Order Rescission Program

The Department's Stop Work Order Rescission Program streamlines the administrative steps that are necessary to correct dangerous conditions. We have improved our communications with construction site executives and management. Now, the Stop Work Order Coordinator on our Buildings Enforcement Safety Team – the BEST Squad – outlines the steps contractors must take to make their site safe.

Once the problems are corrected, our Administrative Enforcement Unit works with project managers/representatives, making sure their Environmental Control Board violation certificates of correction are processed quickly so crews can get back to work. This improved communication benefits New Yorkers by making sites safer faster and keeping people at work. Thanks to this program, in 2009 1,386 certificates of correction were approved and safe work resumed.





Forensic Engineering Unit Director Tim Lynch, PE, and Excavation Unit/Interior Demolition Unit Chief Engineer Delia Shumway, PE, inspecting an excavation site in 2009.

Challenge: Collecting Penalties for Violations

The Environmental Control Board adjudicates the violations that Department of Buildings inspectors issue to building owners, contractors, architects and engineers. Respondents who ignore their ECB court hearing have a default judgment imposed against them. These judgments include a penalty that accrues interest if they are not paid, and some respondents become more defiant as their penalties grow. Default judgments are bad for New York City and New Yorkers: Scofflaws aren't paying what they owe to the City, and owners have open violations associated with their properties – making it harder for them to sell or refinance.

Solution: Penalty Relief Program

Mayor Bloomberg's Penalty Relief Program enabled the Department of Buildings to bring people into compliance without burdening the ECB court. For respondents who proved that they corrected their violations and paid their base violation penalty, the City waived the additional default penalty, late fees and accrued interest. Department attorneys approached respondents with the highest debts, and 3,626 violators complied – generating \$3,522,560 for New York City's taxpayers. Our enforcement helped the City – and lifted a burden from property owners.

IT PAYS TO PAY. NYC PENALTY RELIEF PROGRAM FOR HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS



For a limited time, get relief on your outstanding tickets for dirty sidewalks, illegal posting of handbills and other Environmental Control Board violations.

Applying is easy. All you have to do is provide your contact information. We'll do the rest.

Apply today. The program runs September 21-December 21, 2009. Get more details at nyc.gov/finance or call 311.

The program is for tickets with hearing dates before May 1, 2009. Not all tickets will qualify. For those tickets that qualify, you will not have to pay default, interest or late payment charges.

NYC
Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Christina C. Quinn
City Council Speaker

Challenge: Protecting New Yorkers from Unlicensed Contractors

Unlicensed work can endanger New Yorkers. It often falls short of safety standards, and unlicensed contractors rarely have insurance to protect property owners if something goes wrong. Sub-par gas piping and electrical work can be particularly dangerous, possibly leading to explosions and fires. Moreover, it is much more difficult to hold contractors accountable without licenses to track them.

Solution: The Vehicle Seizure Program

Department investigators are preventing unlicensed contractors from doing illegal work – and deterring others from considering it – with the new Vehicle Seizure Program. This pilot program is keeping unlicensed contractors from getting to their jobs or using their tools. By partnering with Department of Finance deputy sheriffs to tow unlicensed contractors' vehicles and confiscate their equipment, we are making it too difficult for unlicensed contractors to work illegally. In 2009, four contractors pled guilty to performing unlicensed work, and they each paid \$2,500 in penalties.



Challenge: Keeping Illegal Signs from Threatening Safety and Quality of Life

The Construction Codes and Zoning Resolution govern where and how outdoor advertising is allowed to be sure this work is done safely and to prevent advertising from overwhelming our cityscape. Of course, building façades' enormous visibility can generate a high income for outdoor advertising companies and landlords – at the expense of New Yorkers' safety and quality of life.

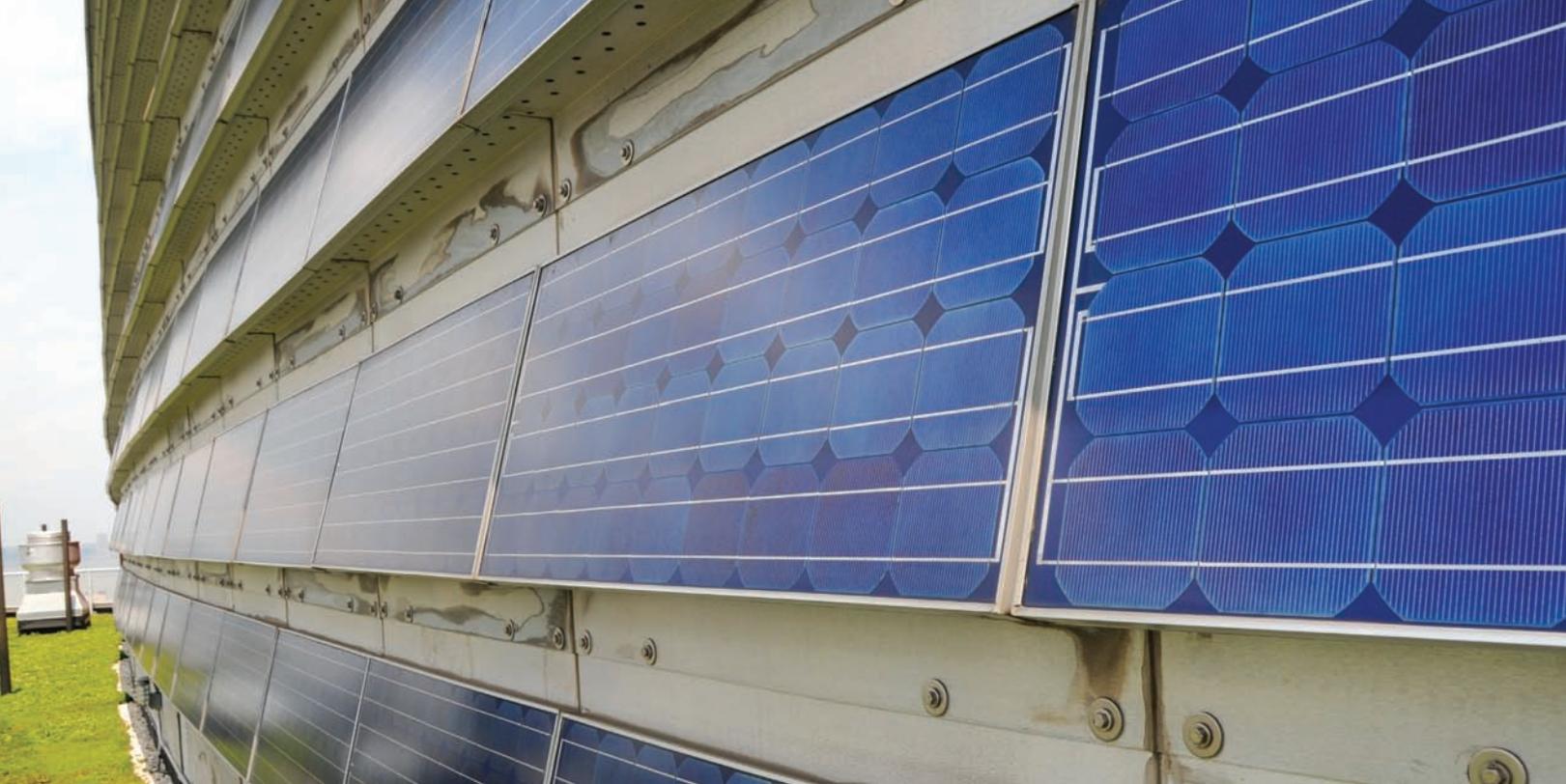
Solution: Aggressively Pursue Illegal Advertising

Our inspectors and attorneys are taking on illegal signs in the field and before administrative law judges. In 2009, our teams issued more than 2,250 violations to property owners, outdoor advertising companies and sign hangers. Together, these violations potentially carry more than \$22 million in penalties. In addition, more property owners are taking down their illegal signs – and fewer are putting them up – thanks to our focused enforcement.

Most often, once we bring a case before the Environmental Control Board, respondents remove their illegal signs before the court hearing. If they don't, we bring the issue to the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. Once the OATH case is filed, virtually all respondents remove their signs. Our attorneys' success rates were so high that the Department only had to forcibly remove signs from one location in 2009.



The Department prevailed at ECB and OATH against a property owner in Lower Manhattan, assessing approximately \$1.5 million in penalties and removing two illegal signs, May 2009.



SUSTAINABILITY

New York City is now positioned to become a national leader in sustainability. Together, industry innovation and government regulation will deliver new energy efficiency standards. The 2010 New York City Energy Conservation Code will empower the Department of Buildings to exceed New York State standards. We have embraced this opportunity, and we are helping the construction industry use new, environment-friendly materials, products and designs.

Reducing the energy we consume brings New York City closer to meeting Mayor Bloomberg's goal of a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Together, we can create a healthier City for all New Yorkers.

Greener, Greater Buildings Plan

Green construction has been predominantly limited to new structures being built or major renovations to properties. However, today's existing buildings will consume 85% of the energy New York City will use in 2030. Mayor Bloomberg's six-point Greener, Greater Buildings Plan addresses this concern by creating 17,880 green jobs and providing financing to help property owners embrace green retrofits. In addition, Department of Buildings experts worked with the Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability to craft the Plan's four new laws, which will dramatically cut the City's energy use, reduce our carbon footprint and save consumers \$700 million in annual energy costs.

Local Law 84/09: Energy and Water Use Benchmarking

Local Law 85/09: NYC Energy Conservation Code

Local Law 87/09: Energy Audits and Retro-Commissioning

Local Law 88/09: Lighting and Electrical Upgrades

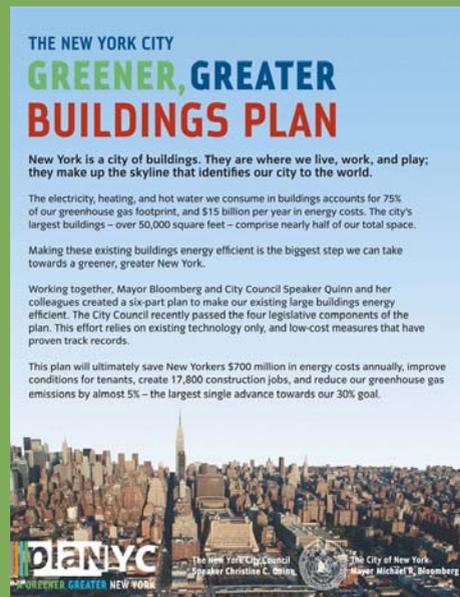
Together, these laws will reduce citywide greenhouse gas emissions by 4.75 percent – the largest reduction achieved by any single program.

Challenge: Increasing Existing Buildings' Energy Efficiency

Existing buildings generate nearly 80% of New York City's greenhouse gas emissions, so increasing their energy efficiency is critical to improving our city's sustainability. However, New York State Energy Conservation Construction Code standards did not apply to projects where less than half of a building system was being renovated.

Solution: The NYC Energy Conservation Code

Thanks to Local Law 85/09 – the NYC Energy Conservation Code – more construction in New York City will be energy-efficient. All building renovations must now fully comply with State energy standards. Building owners can no longer renovate old, inefficient systems by using old, inefficient technology. With nearly 1,000,000 buildings and properties under the Department's jurisdiction, this is an important step forward in making New York more sustainable – and enabling us to lead the nation in energy efficiency standards.



Challenge: Embracing Cutting-Edge Products, Materials and Design

New demand for environment-friendly products, materials and technologies is driving the sustainable technology industry. Responding quickly, producers are bringing new energy-efficient alternatives to the marketplace – often before they've been tested and evaluated for compliance with national standards. Advances in sustainability help guarantee our future – as long as these innovations are safe.

Solution: Buildings Sustainability Board

The Buildings Sustainability Board is fast-tracking review of new sustainable technologies to help New York City go green faster. Our sustainability team recruited outside experts – in engineering, architecture and renewable energy technology – to serve alongside them on the Board. Together, we are analyzing new technology to determine what is safe and what safety improvements are necessary to bring these innovations to New York City's buildings.

In 2009, the Buildings Sustainability Board focused on cogeneration and trigeneration – generators that use the excess heat they create to run other building systems – and wind turbines, which create electricity. These technologies reduce fossil fuel consumption, cut costs and increase efficiency. In 2010, the Board is addressing quality standards for water reuse, demand ventilation and new product design and testing standards for wind turbines.



Chief Sustainability Officer Deborah Taylor, AIA, LEED AP, serves on the Buildings Sustainability Board and regularly educates the construction industry on the Energy Code and green technology.

Rooftop vegetation absorbs rainwater, provides insulation and combats the heat island effect, where urban environments tend to run hotter than surrounding areas.



Challenge: Encouraging the Industry to Embrace Green Technology

Comfort in the status quo, little understanding of new options or simple lack of concern for the environment can keep some designers from going green. New energy and water conservation standards, however, make it imperative that architects, engineers and property owners become willing partners in New York City's sustainability effort.

Solution: Sustainability Education and Outreach

Department of Buildings sustainability experts are regularly meeting with members of the construction industry to encourage green design, explain new Construction Code sustainability requirements and outline new options in technology. To reach as many design professionals as possible, our specialists sponsored courses in the Energy Code at the 2009 Urban Green Expo and worked with multiple professional organizations to develop their own Energy Code courses. The Department is also contributing to future Energy Code development by serving on the International Energy Conservation Code Technical Committee for 2012.



Assistant Commissioner of Technical Affairs and Code Development James P. Colgate, RA, Esq., discusses 2008 Construction Codes requirements, May 2009.

SNAPSHOT: Sustainability Education

3	Professional Trainings
9	Conferences
9	Industry Meetings
12	Professional Groups

Challenge: Promoting High- and Low-Tech Green Improvements

Making meaningful environmental improvements requires us to approach the challenge on multiple fronts. Large-scale developers installing high-tech tools are as important as low-rise property owners making minor adjustments that will have a large-scale benefit. Neither high- nor low-tech green improvements will happen, however, unless property owners and tenants know to demand them.

Challenge: Supporting Green Roofs and Solar Panels

Green roofs and solar panels are two important tools that will help the City reach Mayor Bloomberg's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Green roofs and solar panels can add a substantial load to a roof, so property owners must ensure that these systems are installed safely. Because green projects require costly or difficult installation, many property owners don't consider their options.

Solution: Cool Roofs and Microturbines Website Guides

Our new sustainability website is encouraging New Yorkers to go green. For example, we explain that generators heat up when they produce electricity, and microturbines can capture this heat and use it to regulate a building's temperature. Energy-efficient microturbines save people money. Plus, they reduce the strain on the City's electrical grid, meaning buildings are more efficient and emit less carbon.



Microturbines generate electricity, drawing less on our power grid.



We also highlight the benefits of cool roofs.

Traditional black roofs absorb the sun's energy – causing densely built cities to average as much as 10 degrees hotter than surrounding areas. A silver or white roof reflects the sun's rays away – cutting the tenants' need for air conditioning and helping to reduce New York's average temperature.



Reflective roofs cut heating costs and help reduce urban areas' higher temperatures.

Solution: Promote New York State Tax Incentive Programs

New York State is offering tax incentives for green roofs and solar panels, and the Department is assisting property owners by outlining necessary steps to protect their buildings – and secure tax incentives – as they go green. Green roofs have vegetation that absorbs rainwater, provides insulation and combats the heat island effect, where urban environments can have higher temperatures than surrounding areas. Solar panels can generate electricity, recover thermal energy for reuse and act as a roof covering. When installing these, property owners must hire an architect or engineer, and the Department of Buildings is here to assist owners through the process.



Solar panels can generate electricity, recover thermal energy and act as roof covering.



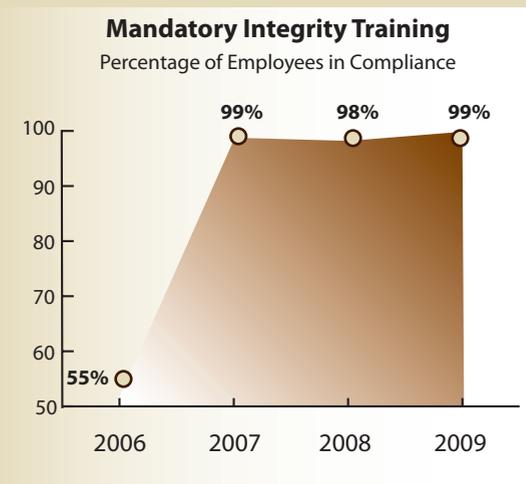
Construction Chief Inspector Donald O'Connor discusses proper practices with workers, April 2009.

INTEGRITY & PUBLIC SERVICE

Integrity is the foundation of construction safety and sound public service. Effective enforcement ensures that contractors, architects, engineers, business proprietors and property owners are held equally to the standards that protect New Yorkers.

A culture change is underway at the Department of Buildings. Our employees are reporting bribe attempts to the Department of Investigation, and their tips have led to more than 70 arrests since 2002. Employees who have found themselves in a difficult situation have become part of the solution, with some courageously joining sting operations to build criminal cases. While there is more work to be done, our employees' courage and honesty have established a solid foundation upon which we are building.

Mandatory Integrity Training



As public servants, our staff members work with contractors, building managers, architects, engineers, designers, homeowners, business owners, construction workers and licensees every business day. When our teams encounter unethical or illegal dilemmas, unexpected nuances can make these moments that much more difficult.

To support our employees – and reinforce the importance of integrity – all Department of Buildings' staff members participate in annual, mandatory integrity training. The Internal Audits and Discipline Unit empowers our employees by helping them identify confusing issues and teaching them how to handle these situations.

Challenge: Reinforcing Legal and Ethical Standards

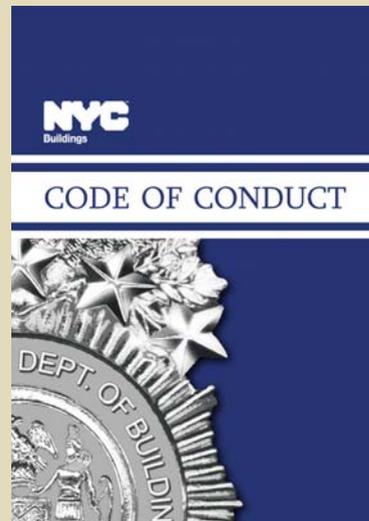
Maintaining a productive and successful Department rests upon our employees serving New Yorkers with honesty and fairness. It's easy to inform staff members that misconduct will not be tolerated and that they cannot accept any gift of any value. Our greater challenge is helping employees recognize a conflict of interest and know how to meet our ethical standards each day.

Solution: 2009 Code of Conduct

Each employee is responsible for upholding the integrity of our agency, and in 2009 we updated our Code of Conduct to reflect the Department's growth and evolution. We distributed the 2009 Code of Conduct to all of our employees as a resource to help them – and the Department – succeed. The 2009 Code of Conduct outlines our:

- Ethical Code and Principals;
- Standards of Conduct;
- Confidentiality and Privacy Requirements;
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy; and
- Rules Against Receiving Gifts.

The Code of Conduct also reiterates that all employees have a duty to report any inappropriate or illegal behavior. To reinforce these standards, we distributed the Code of Conduct to nearly 12,000 filing representatives and contractors who conduct business with the Department.



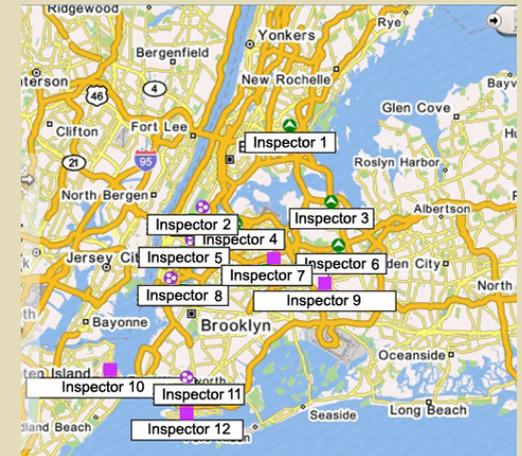
Challenge: Ensuring Inspector Response

Department of Buildings inspectors are called upon to protect New Yorkers in a myriad of ways. We inspect construction sites, respond to emergencies with firefighters and police officers, and investigate thousands of complaints. The importance of these responsibilities demands that we perform our duties with honesty and integrity. We will not let our dedicated and distinguished employees be undermined by individuals who do not share our commitment to serving New York City.

Solution: GPS Technology

In 2009, the Department activated Global Positioning System technology in Department-issued cell phones and BlackBerrys for all inspectors. Inspection managers now use a web-based tracking tool to monitor inspectors' real-time movements during their work hours. This ensures that our teams are performing their duties – and makes it easier to hold them accountable if they are not.

GPS technology is also helping our teams succeed in the field: Supervisors can more easily identify the closest inspectors to an emergency and better coordinate nearby personnel.



Department supervisors can easily determine where on-duty inspectors are by using a web-based tracking tool.



The "Urban Umbrella" was designed by Young-Hwan Choi, with Andres Cortes, RA, and Sarrah Khan, PE, of New York-based design firm Agencie Group.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

When a difficult economy threatens jobs and impedes development, City leaders must take decisive action. Halted construction projects represent lost livelihoods for workers, diminished office space for businesses and fewer homes for New Yorkers.

The Department of Buildings has worked with Mayor Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Quinn to create programs that are helping construction projects overcome economic challenges. We also launched a unique design initiative that will help New York City's retail businesses thrive by making their storefronts more accessible to customers during construction. Together, these courses of action will help New York City lead our nation's economic recovery.

Strengthening Business Development

In a challenging economy, many people create their own job opportunities by starting a business or pursuing new fields of work. Just as 311 gave New



Yorkers a single phone number to address issues with City agencies, the new online tool Business Express gives easy access to information about government permitting, licensing, tax payments, incentive programs and business applications. This Internet resource is saving entrepreneurs and small businesses time and money. Now, they can better focus on economic development: starting up their businesses, generating income and hiring new workers.

The Department of Buildings was among seven City agencies honored for developing Business Express. The Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications presented us with the Best IT Collaboration Among Agencies Award for our role in building this program.

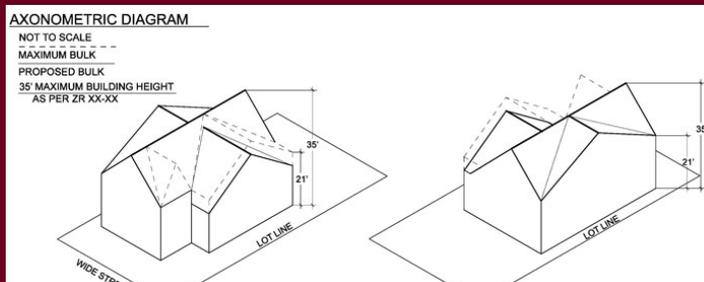
Challenge: Advancing Development While Addressing New Yorkers' Concerns

Compliant development ensures New York City's growth and revitalization. Of course, residents are concerned when they suspect new construction does not conform to the Zoning Resolution, which regulates a neighborhood's density and a building's permitted use. However, no one wins when zoning issues stop construction after it has begun: Dormant sites are a blight on neighborhoods; workers lose jobs and residents have fewer housing options.

Solution: Development Challenge Process

New Yorkers are now able to access information on development projects and easily raise issues before construction begins. Our new Development Challenge Process helps New Yorkers better understand what is being built in their communities and empowers them to challenge projects while they're still just lines on paper – not half-built buildings. Because issues are now addressed earlier in the process, developers have greater certainty when their projects move forward.

Newly required zoning diagrams are the key to this process. Architects and engineers must now submit drawn-to-scale diagrams of their new buildings, enlargements and any project where a building's bulk is changed. New York is the first U.S. city to put these images online, giving in-depth information on upcoming projects. In 2009, we uploaded more than 400 diagrams for public review.



Challenge: Enabling Stalled Projects to Resume Faster

Many property owners are finding it difficult to secure project financing – even for construction that has already broken ground. In 2009, the Department of Buildings identified more than 500 stalled sites, and their negative effects are far-reaching. Abruptly halted work means lost livelihoods, less housing for residents and fewer offices for businesses. Plus, stalled sites can be dangerous, undermine a neighborhood's quality of life and hurt property values.

Solution: The Stalled Sites Safety Program

Under the Stalled Sites Safety Program, property owners must submit a tailored site safety plan to keep their stalled construction safe. If they follow their maintenance plan and keep their site safe, the Department may extend the project's active construction permits for up to four years.

This program helps New York in multiple ways. It encourages owners to live up to their legal responsibility to keep their sites safe. Moreover, it makes it easier for owners to finance these projects – cutting the time New Yorkers have stalled construction in their neighborhoods and getting workers back on the job faster.



The Department is monitoring this stalled project in midtown Manhattan as its owners keep their site safe.



Challenge: Making Businesses More Accessible and Improving Quality of Life

New York City is constantly evolving, and the ways in which the City serves its people has also changed. However, one element of construction that has remained stagnant is the design of sidewalk sheds. These temporary structures cover more than one million linear feet of our sidewalks and are designed to protect pedestrians. While safe, they are unsightly – and have not changed since first designed in 1957. Sidewalk sheds make it difficult to navigate our sidewalks, conceal business signs and obscure New York’s cityscape.



Solution: urbanSHED International Design Competition

In 2009, our urbanSHED International Design Competition called upon architects, engineers, designers and students to develop a sidewalk shed worthy of New York City. The jury’s design and construction experts reviewed 164 submissions from 28 countries, analyzing their safety, sustainability, Construction Code compliance and constructability.



In early 2010, Mayor Bloomberg announced the winning design – the Urban Umbrella – by Young-Hwan Choi, a Korean architecture student studying at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design. He partnered with Andres Cortes, RA, and Sarrah Khan, PE, of New York-based design firm Agencie Group.

Unlike other design competitions, Choi’s Urban Umbrella will become a reality. Later in 2010, the Alliance for Downtown New York will construct a full-scale prototype at a Lower Manhattan job-site. We expect New York City’s construction industry to begin using this new sidewalk shed design within three years.

“Urban Umbrella” rendering



Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner LiMandri unveil a new design for sidewalk sheds, January 2010.



Mayor Bloomberg and Commissioner LiMandri with the winning team: Young-Hwan Choi, Andres Cortes, RA, and Sarrah Khan, PE, January 2010.

We appreciate the support and commitment from the many people who helped make the urbanSHED International Design Competition a success:

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg
City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn

Richard T. Anderson
New York Building Congress

Fredric M. Bell, FAIA, New York Chapter of the
American Institute of Architects

Elizabeth H. Berger
Alliance for Downtown New York

Anthony P. Schirripa, FAIA, New York Chapter
of the American Institute of Architects

Susanna Sirefman, Dovetail Design Strategists
Competiton Advisor

ABNY Foundation

Illuminating Engineering Society
New York City Section

Structural Engineers Association of New York

The urbanSHED Jury

Commissioner Amanda Burden, FAICP
Department of City Planning

David Childs, FAIA, Municipal Arts Society
& Skidmore, Owings and Merrill

Craig Dykers, Snøhetta

Jean Oei, Morphosis

Commissioner Jeanette Sadik-Khan
Department of Transportation

Craig Michael Schwitter, PE
Buro Happold North America

Frank Sciame, New York Building Congress
& F.J. Sciame Construction Co.

Ada Tolla, LOT-EK



The "Urban Umbrella" was designed by Young-Hwan Choi, with Andres Cortes, RA, and Sarrah Khan, PE, of New York-based design firm Agencie Group.



Plumbing Inspector and Army Reservist Anthony Thompson is serving in Afghanistan.

SERVICE BEYOND NEW YORK



Plumbing Inspector Anthony Thompson Serves in Afghanistan

Department of Buildings plumbing inspectors play a vital role in ensuring public safety by inspecting the construction of plumbing and fire protection systems throughout New York City.

Plumbing Inspector Anthony Thompson, who serves in the U.S. Army Reserves, is bringing his skills overseas to Afghanistan to protect his fellow soldiers' health and safety. As Specialist with the 994th Engineering Company Combat Heavy, he and his unit are building plumbing systems for military facilities and nearby towns.

"Both jobs are about protecting public safety," said Inspector Thompson. "At the Department, I'm responsible for checking plumbing installations and fire safety systems. There can be serious safety and health risks if these systems are not up to code or not working properly. The same goes for the Army and Afghanistan. I'll be over there providing essential services."

Following in his younger brother's footsteps, Inspector Thompson enlisted in the Army Reserves in 2007, the same year he joined the Department. He endured weeks of combat training in 2008 and has now taken a Leave of Absence for Military Duty to serve in Afghanistan.

A lifelong Brooklyn resident, Inspector Thompson, 30, said he is excited about his first deployment, but admitted he will miss his infant daughter, Jordan. He is confident she will understand his reasons for leaving when she is older.

"I didn't want to just sit back anymore," he said. "I wanted to be a part of something. I'm doing it for my fellow soldiers and for my country. That's what this is about."

To prepare for his deployment, Inspector Thompson had been spending time at home with Jordan and his family. He expects to be overseas for at least 15 months.

Our Department supports him in this important mission.

Buildings Employees Who Have Served Beyond New York

Anthony Armatti

Specialist, Military Police, U.S. Army
General Services Facilities Coordinator

Joseph Best, Jr.

Specialist, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army
Electrical Inspector, Manhattan

Joseph Cobian

Sergeant, Military Police, U.S. Marines
Scaffold Safety Team Inspector

Robert Devito

E3 Rank Airman, U.S. Navy
Associate Boiler Inspector, Manhattan

Michael Geraci,

Specialist, 1156 Engineer Battalion, U.S. Army
Special Operations Supervising Inspector

Gary Grandstaff

Sergeant, Airwing, U.S. Marines
Excavations Inspector

Stephen Gucker

Private First Class, U. S. Marines
Plumbing Inspector, Brooklyn

Renaldo Hylton

Captain, Field Artillery, U.S. Army National Guard
Administrative Enforcement Unit Director

Benjamin Karan

Specialist, U.S. Army
Agency Chief Contracting Officer

Kenneth Lukaszewski

U.S. Navy
Low Pressure Boiler Inspector, Central Inspections

Alphonso Marshall

Field Wireman, U.S. Army
Chief Elevator Inspector

Ronald McCain, RA

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Francisco Rodriguez

Sergeant, Special Police, U.S. Air Force
House Connections Chief Inspector

Jose Scott

Technical Sergeant, U.S. Air Force
Construction Inspector, Brooklyn

Alan Steffan

Captain, Southern European Task Force, U.S. Army
Excavations, Interior Demolition, Stalled Sites Inspector

Norris Thompson

Sergeant, Military Airlift Command, U.S. Air Force
Scaffold Safety Team Inspector

George Zimmerman

Specialist 4, Signal Corps, U.S. Army
Construction Inspector, BEST



2010 and Beyond

2009 was a pivotal year for the Department of Buildings. As we implemented new safety measures to minimize danger, construction-related fatalities dramatically decreased. We continued to reach workers, showing them how to protect themselves from a fall by using safety harnesses properly – and reminding them to wear this equipment while on the job.

We also expanded our public safety education. We launched the Living Safely citywide campaign to warn people about the dangers in illegally converted rooms. This initiative taught New Yorkers how to identify illegal housing and how to protect themselves. We also focused on the most vulnerable New Yorkers – our children – by expanding our annual elementary school elevator safety program. This year we instructed more than 2,000 children across the City in how to stay safe in elevators and on escalators.

We also responded to the slowing economy. Our Stalled Sites Safety Program helps property owners secure financing more easily and lets their crews get back to work faster – if they follow stringent safety precautions. The Development Challenge Process gives New Yorkers a better way to raise their concerns about construction in their neighborhoods – while giving developers more clarity when their projects proceed. Finally, our new Buildings Sustainability Board fast-tracks review of new green products and materials, ultimately allowing designers and property owners to embrace new technologies.

In 2009, we worked closely with the construction industry and proved that development and safety can go together. In 2010, we will continue our partnership in serving New Yorkers, making the City safer today – and more sustainable for the future.



Robert D. LiMandri
Commissioner
New York City Department of Buildings





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