

October 9, 1991

To The Plumbing Industry:

The Department of Buildings is constantly considering ways to increase productivity and provide better service. This is true now more than ever as the budget reductions cut our staff by 107 positions and \$3,000,000. Accordingly, I want to make you aware of what we are doing to assist you and ask for your help in getting some legislative changes.

PRAs by Mail: Commencing November 25, 1991 you will no longer need to visit the Buildings Department and stand in line in order to file plumbing repair applications (PRAs) and commence work. *All PRA filings will be done exclusively through the mail.* This change will save plumbers thousands of hours. Enclosed please find a notice providing the details of the new procedure.

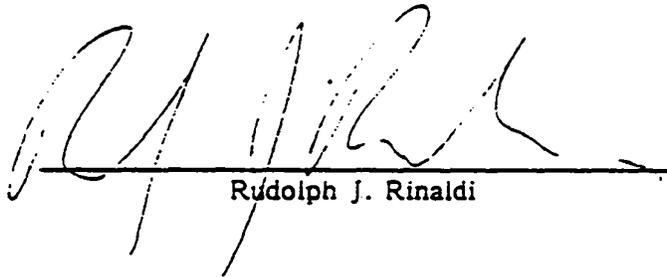
Increase PRA Cap From \$7,500 to \$20,000: The "PRAs By Mail" will help you but we want to do even more. In 1989, the Department proposed legislation to raise the monetary filing limit on PRAs from \$7,500 to \$20,000. This would allow a greater number of plumbing applications to be filed under the abbreviated PRAs procedure permitted by the Code.

Reducing Unnecessary Inspections: The Department has drafted legislation proposing the exemption of minor plumbing work from mandatory inspection by the City, exactly like Local Law 73/88 for minor electrical work. Minor plumbing work must still be filed with the Department and be performed by a licensed plumber. This work will be spot-checked by the City. The proposed exemption includes, but is not limited to, replacement of fixtures on existing or new roughing (provided toilet room configuration is not changed from approved plans), piping and connections for medical gases (O₂ - CO₂, Halon) and relays and house sewers (exterior). By reducing mandatory inspection requirements on minor work, the Department will be able to better deploy its resources and provide quicker service on larger jobs.

Privatization: Lastly, the Department has drafted legislation and incorporating documents to establish a private corporation to conduct plan reviews and inspections for plumbing and fire suppression work. This move toward privatization is prompted by, among other reasons, the persistent staffing/recruitment difficulties and rising workloads within the Department's plumbing inspection division. Meetings with the Plumbing Foundation, Master Plumbers Council and New York Fire Sprinkler Contractors Association are ongoing

and when all the issues (powers, jurisdiction, finances, etc.) have been resolved the bill will be submitted to the City Council.

The above proposed legislative changes would significantly help the City of New York and the plumbing industry and I ask that you work with your respective association(s) to gain passage of these bills.



Rudolph J. Rinaldi

Enclosure