

NYSED Office of  
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## Newsletter Highlights

Message from  
Carl Thurnau, PE

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Act Funding

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# NYSED Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter



Carl T. Thurnau, P.E.

Issue #124 January 2016

## Important Backlog Reduction Information

As many of you know, our office was provided an additional \$800,000 in funding for staffing and resources to reduce the backlog. This funding was also included in the Governor's current budget proposal for the coming year. While we seek additional permanent staff, we are also employing multiple strategies in order to approve as many projects as possible in time for summer 2016 construction.

These strategies include:

- ✓ Expediting emergency projects;
- ✓ Streamlining existing review processes to quickly approve those projects that pose little health and safety risk;
- ✓ Expediting seasonally critical projects such as roof and boiler issues;
- ✓ Expediting projects that deal with hazardous material abatements;
- ✓ Contracting with multiple engineering firms to review and approve backlogged school projects; Several contracts are in place and project reviews are proceeding. The remaining contracts are expected to be approved in the near future, and projects will be shipped to them immediately.
- ✓ Contracting with multiple engineering firms that specialize in energy to review backlogged school energy performance projects; Several contracts are approved and project reviews are proceeding.

- ✓ Contract hiring of a recently retired Department engineering staff person;
- and
- ✓ Hiring additional permanent engineering staff within the Department.

Collectively, these activities are starting to have a positive impact. The backlog has been reduced from 42-44 weeks to 34-36 weeks and from 870 projects to 660 projects currently. We expect this to continue to drop as we employ additional private firms.

### Critical Information:

1) Submit your architectural addenda—do not wait for engineering comments. Please be aware that we must have architectural reviews completed and signed off with any necessary addenda prior to your project being sent out to a consultant for engineering review. Many projects include modifications to, or construction of fire ratings on new and existing walls. If Architectural reviews are complete, engineering consultants can rely on those documents for locations requiring fire/smoke dampers, fire stopping, and so on. Additionally, it will be extremely difficult to manage architectural approvals and coordinate with engineering reviews if addenda arrive in Facilities Planning after projects have been sent outside for engineering review.

2) Documents must be complete. Please ensure that all documents already in facilities planning are complete and updated. If you have made changes to your engineering documents while waiting for review, please get revised documents to facilities planning AS SOON AS POSSIBLE in order to ensure the most complete set is either sent to a consultant or reviewed in house. As the backlog comes down, we may review your project sooner than anticipated. We are aware of the practice of submitting incomplete work as placeholders due to the backlog, and we understand the backlog has made this situation worse. However, it is unproductive for everyone involved, particularly all school clients, if your projects are not complete and ready for review.

Is there a topic you would like addressed in the Facilities Planning Newsletter? Please email suggested topics and comments to: [emscfp@nysed.gov](mailto:emscfp@nysed.gov)

## Smart Schools Bond Act Funding

## Carbon Monoxide Requirements

**The SED Application Business Portal is open and available for submission of Smart School Investment Plans.**

The Smart Schools Bond Act guidance document is available at:

[http://p1232.nysed.gov/mgtserv/documents/SmartSchoolsBondActGuidance\\_AL12.23.15.pdf](http://p1232.nysed.gov/mgtserv/documents/SmartSchoolsBondActGuidance_AL12.23.15.pdf)

The purpose of the Smart Schools Bond Act is to improve learning and opportunity for public and nonpublic school students by funding capital projects to:

- ✓ Install high-speed broadband or wireless internet connectivity for schools and communities;
- ✓ Acquire learning technology equipment or facilities, including but not limited to interactive whiteboards, computer servers, and desktop, laptop, and tablet computers;
- ✓ Construct, enhance, and modernize educational facilities to accommodate pre- kindergarten programs and to provide instructional space to replace classroom trailers; and/or
- ✓ Install high-tech security features in school buildings and on school campuses, including but not limited to video surveillance, emergency notification systems, and physical access controls.

### **Contact Information**

#### **Smart Schools Program Questions**

Contact the SED Office of Educational Management Services at:

(518) 474-6541 or email: [Smartschools@nysed.gov](mailto:Smartschools@nysed.gov)

#### **Capital Project Questions**

Contact the SED Office of Facilities Planning at:  
(518) 474-3906 or email: [emscfp@nysed.gov](mailto:emscfp@nysed.gov)

For additional information, please see:

[http://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/smart\\_schools/](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/mgtserv/smart_schools/)

Facilities Staff have participated in several programs to provide guidance on compliance with the new Carbon Monoxide requirement. Most recently, Carl Thurnau participated in a webinar hosted by the New York State School Facilities Association provided for school facility directors as well as architects and engineers.

The webinar PowerPoint slides, as well as a recording of the webinar, are available on the Association Website at:

<https://www.sbga.org/professional-development/education-training>

Scroll down the page for the CO presentation.

The webinar concentrated on compliance for existing buildings, which represent 99% of compliance issues prior to the June 27, 2016 deadline. Examples of floor plans, and alarm/detection equipment are provided.

We remain available to answer questions, and you may fax us a floor plan to receive guidance on any troublesome placement issue you may have. We will do our best to respond in a reasonable timeframe.

## Questions From the Field:

This section will address an actual question which has been raised by a school facility professional in the field.

**The person we've hired to conduct our annual fire inspection advertises that they're qualified to conduct the inspection, but is there a way to verify their credentials?**

The New York State Department of State Division of Building Standards and Codes is charged with the certification of Building Safety Inspectors and Code Enforcement Officials.

A **Building Safety Inspector** is a person who performs fire safety and property maintenance inspections on existing buildings. Building Safety inspector enforcement activities include fire safety and/or property maintenance inspections of existing buildings and structures.

A **Code Enforcement Official** is a person who performs any enforcement activity. Code enforcement official enforcement activities include: building safety inspector enforcement activities; review and/or approval of plans incidental to the issuance of a permit for the construction or alteration of buildings and structures; construction inspections performed during and/or upon completion of the construction or alteration of buildings and structures; and any other enforcement activity that is not also a building safety inspector enforcement activity.

The certification process is an on-going process which requires the completion of annual in-service training in order to maintain one's certification. For more information on training requirements, see: <http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/TrainingRegs.html>.

**ONLY** individuals who are currently certified by the Department of State may conduct annual school fire safety inspections. To verify whether or not the individual is currently certified, all individuals certified as Building Safety Inspectors and Code Enforcement Officials are list on the Department of State's web site at:

- ✓ <http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/certBSIlist.html>  
(Building Safety Inspectors)
- ✓ <http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/certceolist.html>  
(Code Enforcement Officials)

Questions or concerns related to the certification process or these lists should be directed to the Department of State—see: [http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/reg\\_off\\_cty.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/DCEA/reg_off_cty.html).