



Office of Facilities Planning Newsletter Update #12 – February 2001

If you would like to have this Update sent directly to you by e-mail,
please send your e-mail address to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov

Please continue to send in your comments and requests. Our purpose is to provide information, which will help all Consultants and Facilities Planning provide a quick concise review of all projects. This will help the schools get their construction projects out to bid in a timely manner.

Get to Know Us Better:

We're going to introduce you to the entire staff of our office, one at a time, starting with this issue and beginning with our invaluable support staff, in alphabetical order. We feel that if you know each of us a little better, especially our roles and responsibilities here in the office, you will be able to direct your calls and questions more easily to the appropriate person. With that in mind, please meet Barbara Castracani.

We do have two Barbara's in the office and they are both rather short in stature but not in what they do or how they do it in terms of taking care of your projects. Barbara Castracani has been with this Department for approximately 27 years. She has been directly affiliated with our office for about six months, but for five years she was secretary to Brian Walsh, who used to be in a managerial position over our office.

Barb has a lot of great skills in the secretarial area as well as being a great organizer and a fast learner. She is also very flexible in her office duties and right now is assisting the project managers in getting the final submissions organized so that the project managers' reviews can be expedited. The architects and engineers hired by the districts will be hearing from her directly if the initial final submission is missing something!!

On a more personal note, Barb is the mother of two grown children and four stepchildren and the proud grandmother of four beautiful little girls, with twins expected this summer!

Energy Performance Contracts and 10% Building Aid Incentive:

Please note the following:

Energy Performance Contracts are not eligible for the 10% Building Aid Incentive. Energy Performance Contracts are not subject to voter approval, and therefore are ineligible for the 10 % Building Aid Incentive.

Ask One of Our Project Managers!:

We are introducing a new section to the newsletter that will be dependent on your questions and need for information to properly submit your projects to us. If you have any questions, concerns, or issues you would like addressed in this newsletter, please fax or e-mail them to the project manager you usually work with in our office and we will try to publish the answers in the next newsletter. As it is general information that we are trying to disseminate to all interested parties, please make your questions generic in nature rather than specific to a particular district or project.

Telephone Calls:

In order to assist our support staff in putting your calls through to the appropriate individual who can answer your questions, please identify the topic you are calling about--such as a final cost report, lost forms, an LOI form, an architectural problem, an engineering concern, status of a project recently submitted, etc. We find that a lot of people simply ask for their project manager and a lot of those calls then have to be redirected by the project manager to another member of the staff.

New Procedures for Letter of Intent (LOI) Requests:

Due to the large number of requests for project control numbers, we are requesting all school districts and BOCES to use our Letter of Intent (LOI) forms that are available on our website at:

<https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/LOIFRM.html>. Please note that these forms have been recently updated to require the signature of a contact person in the school district or BOCES.

The LOI forms are available for the following types of projects: New Building, Addition, or Reconstruction; Leased Space or Discovered Building; Manufactured Building; and District-Wide projects.

These forms are designed to speed up the process of issuing project control numbers by requesting pertinent and accurate information needed to enter the project into our system. Requests that are sent without these forms are usually routed to the project manager for interpretation and verification of building names and numbers, type of project, and scope of work to be done. This, in turn, almost always results in unnecessary delays in processing time.

When our LOI forms are completed correctly, the forms go directly to the processing center for data entry into our system and initial response letters with packets of materials can then be returned to the school district or BOCES in the most timely manner.

One more helpful hint: The quickest way to get these forms to us is to fax them (518 486-5918). If you do this, please do **not** send a hard copy by mail. In addition, it is not necessary to send a cover letter. Simply fax the form itself.

Free Egress – Elevators and Chair Lifts:

All occupied areas of school buildings must allow for free egress from the building during emergencies including power failures.

Elevators and chairlifts, particularly those that are key operated, need to incorporate systems or devices that automatically lower the car to an appropriate floor level and open the door(s) during an emergency or power failure. Newly installed elevators are currently required to return to the main floor during a fire alarm by the Elevator Safety Code ANSI A17.1.

For existing buildings, all building equipment and hardware should be checked for compliance and either retrofitted or specific instructions should be provided in the building's Emergency Action Plan that is published and shared with all concerned parties so that all building occupants can freely exit the building.

We are happy to hear from you. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments please send them to Joe Levy at jlevy@mail.nysed.gov.

We plan to address any subject which will help the schools and consultants quickly and efficiently receive their project approvals.