

Facilities Planning

Newsletter 80 – October 2006

Annual Visual Inspections:

It is time for the Annual Visual Inspections. The Commissioner's Regulations require them to be completed no later than November 15, 2006. The intent of this inspection is to re-evaluate those items inspected during last year's Building Condition Survey. This will result in the identification and subsequent correction of specific problems, the inspection of previous repairs, as well as the inspection of previously identified problems to determine if conditions have deteriorated over the past year. This inspection information should also be used to update the five-year Facilities Plan and reprioritize district projects if necessary.

The 2006-07 Annual Visual Inspection instrument is similar in content to last year's Building Condition Survey. The data from this survey must be submitted online no later than January 15, 2007.

Necessary forms and instructions are located on the Facilities Planning web site at: www.emsc.nysed.gov/facplan/. Please click on "Annual Visual Inspection." Forms and directions are provided on that site. The inspection must be performed by a team consisting of the director of facilities, a code enforcement official, and a member of the health and safety committee as prescribed in Section 155.4(b)(1)(iii) of the Regulations of the Commissioner.

If you have any questions on the Annual Visual Inspections, please contact Dave Clapp at (518) 474-3906 or dclapp@mail.nysed.gov.

New Law Regarding School Inspection:

Below is a copy of the text of the new legislation signed into law in New York State. Facilities Planning is moving forward to incorporate this legislation in the Annual Fire Safety Report and "Manual for Fire and Building Safety Inspections in Public and Nonpublic Schools". We intend to incorporate these requirements by November or December 2006.

The new verbiage added to Section 807-a of the Education Law is "The commissioner shall require a re-inspection of school buildings where a report of inspection identified violations that, if uncorrected, would cause the department to deny an annual certificate of occupancy to such school building, and shall require additional re-inspections until it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the commissioner that said violations have been corrected."

Many local building inspectors are under the impression the law also states "inspected for fire safety purposes by persons certified by the state to enforce the Uniform Code, and that schools may not deny entry to such a person." They are under the impression that they may enter school district premises at any time they wish. They CANNOT, it is not permitted by this law. Only the Fire Safety Inspector conducting the Annual Fire Safety Inspection will be entering your premises for inspections. Similarly, this individual is also required to be an individual who is certified by the NY

State Department of State to enforce the Uniform Code or conduct fire safety inspections. The qualifications are the same for your fire safety inspector and the local building inspector. There is no compromise in the level of knowledge or qualifications.

If you, or your local building inspector, require any additional information or need to discuss this issue further, please give us a call or send us an email. The "Big 5" City School Districts are not subject to these new requirements.

EPA Environmental Workshops for Schools:

Ten environmental compliance workshops for K-12 school personnel will be conducted this fall by colleges and universities, with EPA Region 2 oversight. These colleges and universities include Columbia University, Long Island University, Pratt Institute, Raritan Valley Community College and Vassar College.

The registration web site has been launched for the workshops and can be found at: www.K-12compliance.org. The invitation brochure includes the agenda and can be downloaded from this non-EPA web site. Copies of the two guidance manuals noted in the invitation brochure will be made available at the upcoming workshops. The manuals will be posted on the EPA Region 2 web site (web page location to be determined) after the fall workshops are underway.

You are cordially invited to attend the workshops. EPA and the aforementioned colleges and universities would greatly appreciate it if you could help spread the word to your fellow co-workers and other contacts you may have about the upcoming workshops. Please note, the K-12 target audience for these compliance workshops is listed in the brochure and does not include the general public, parents or school advocacy groups (i.e., general public/community nature).

An Index of our Newsletters is available on our web site at <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/facplan/NewsLetters.htm>.

If you would like to have this Newsletter 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. If you have a subject you would like addressed, feedback on the material you read, input or general comments we are happy to hear from you.