

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Description

The Code of Virginia requires all local governments to enforce the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC). The Department of Building Construction and Inspections fulfills this role for Henrico County by reviewing and inspecting the structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems of buildings and structures in Henrico County to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of the County's citizens. The reviews and inspections are based on criteria that are consistent with nationally recognized codes and standards at reasonable cost levels.

The Department also enforces the maintenance and unsafe provisions of the USBC and the Drug Blight and Bawdy Places ordinances to further the objectives of the County's Community Maintenance Program. In addition, the Department administers the graffiti ordinance to remove graffiti in the County.

These traditional code enforcement activities are supplemented with public awareness programs that include a quarterly newsletter to educate residents, contractors, architects, and engineers about specific code and enforcement issues. Educational programs are produced in cooperation with Chesterfield and Hanover Counties to educate the public and the construction community about various construction issues.

Objectives

- To ensure the public health, safety, and welfare affected by the design and construction of buildings and structures in Henrico County.
- To ensure the quality of inspections by field staff through education and certification to State standards.
- To provide services that equal customer expectations for professionalism and accountability.
- To establish policies and procedures that are consistent, practical, workable, and enforceable.

Budget Highlights

The Department of Building Construction and Inspections budget is divided into two sections: Building Inspections and Community Maintenance. The total FY2013-14 budget for the Department is \$4,046,114, a decrease of 1.1 percent when compared to the FY2012-13 approved budget.

Annual Fiscal Plan

Description	FY12 Actual	FY13 Original	FY14 Approved	Change 13 to 14
Personnel	\$ 3,772,822	\$ 3,830,744	\$ 3,806,515	(0.6%)
Operation	290,501	416,222	390,322	(6.2%)
Capital	0	300	300	0.0%
Sub-Total	<u>\$ 4,063,323</u>	<u>\$ 4,247,266</u>	<u>\$ 4,197,137</u>	<u>(1.2%)</u>
Interdepartmental Billings	(146,567)	(155,739)	(151,023)	(3.0%)
Total Budget	<u>3,916,756</u>	<u>4,091,527</u>	<u>4,046,114</u>	<u>(1.1%)</u>
Personnel Complement ⁽¹⁾	56	54	53	(1)

⁽¹⁾ One vacant position is being moved to the County's hold complement for FY2013-14. Also, two vacant positions were moved to the hold complement in FY2012-13.

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Performance Measures

	<u>FY12</u>	<u>FY13</u>	<u>FY14</u>	<u>Change 13 to 14</u>
Workload Measures				
Total Permits Issued	13,771	13,750	13,750	0
Single Family Permits Issued	675	675	675	0
Building Inspections	21,475	25,750	25,750	0
Electrical Inspections	10,276	12,300	12,300	0
Mechanical Inspections	8,459	10,000	10,000	0
Plumbing Inspections	13,280	16,000	16,000	0
Fire Protection Inspections	2,167	2,500	2,500	0
Elevator Inspections	154	175	175	0
Sign Inspections	425	350	350	0
Existing Structure Inspections	2,267	2,300	2,300	0
FOG Inspections	212	275	275	0
Total Inspections	56,236	67,075	67,075	0
Efficiency Measures				
Residential Inspections/Inspector/Day	9	10	10	0
Mechanical /Plumbing Inspections/Inspector/Day	13	17	17	0
Electrical Inspections/Inspector/Day	11	13	13	0
Fire Protection Inspections/Inspector/Day	4	5	5	0
Commercial Inspections/Inspector/Day	0	6	6	0
Average # of Inspections/Single Family Dwelling	35	36	36	0

The personnel component of the budget is decreasing \$24,229, or 0.6 percent, attributable to targeted reductions identified by the Department, including the elimination of one vacant Office Assistant III position within the Property Maintenance Section of the Department. The elimination of this position was possible through the realization of operational efficiencies. These decreases were partially offset by increases in personnel costs related to State legislation (Senate Bill 497) requiring a 5.0 percent employee contribution to employee pensions. The implementation of this mandate resulted in an increase in salaries and corresponding benefits costs, as well as a decrease in the budgeted cost of VRS Retirement.

The operating component of the budget is decreasing \$25,900, or 6.2 percent, through targeted reductions identified by the department. The capital component of the budget remains unchanged.

Workload projections are based on current conditions and future developments that have already been announced for Henrico County. The Department projects the total number of permits issued for FY2012-13 to remain relatively flat, and it is

anticipated that these permit levels will remain in FY2013-14.

The Building Inspections section is responsible for assuring that structural stability, fire safety, and electrical safety is provided in newly constructed buildings throughout the County through compliance with nationally recognized building codes and standards. This section also inspects structures for compliance with accessibility, sanitation, light and ventilation, and energy and water conservation standards as referenced in the building code.

The Building Inspections section's budget for FY2013-14 totals \$3,775,839. This reflects an increase of \$20,648, or 0.5 percent when compared to the FY2012-13 approved budget. The increase is attributable to salary and benefit cost increases resulting from Senate Bill 497. The operating and capital components of the budget remain flat for FY2013-14.

Accounted for in the FY2013-14 proposed budget is the restructuring of Structure & Equipment Permit Fees charged by the Department. The enhancement of

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fees related to building inspections, as well as electrical, mechanical and plumbing inspections was initiated in order to better align the revenues collected for the services provided, with the actual cost of providing those services. Despite the proposed fee restructuring, Henrico County still maintains the lowest permit fees relative to comparably sized localities in the region.

The Community Maintenance Division within the Building Inspections Department is responsible for resolving violations of the building code and graffiti ordinance for existing structures. This Division's budget totals \$270,275, which represents a decrease of \$66,061, or 19.6 percent from the prior fiscal year, attributable to targeted reductions in the personnel and operating components of the budget.

Included in this budget are the costs for two positions that are part of an initiative to ensure that restaurants have the proper equipment to prevent oil and grease from entering the sewer system. The total ongoing cost for these two positions equals \$151,023. The entirety of this cost will be reimbursed by the Department of Public Utilities. As such, an interdepartmental billing account has been budgeted to reflect the reimbursement of these ongoing costs.

The Community Maintenance Division will continue to work closely with the Department of Community Revitalization, as they also provide community maintenance services. Community Revitalization's of services include those related to identifying the needs established communities and providing assistance in improving the properties in these areas.