



Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs DCRA (CR)

MISSION

The mission of the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) aims to protect the health, safety, economic interests and quality of life of residents, businesses and visitors in the District of Columbia by ensuring code compliance and regulating business.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

DCRA is responsible for issuing licenses and permits, conducting inspections, enforcing building, housing, and safety codes, regulating land use and development and providing consumer education and advocacy services.

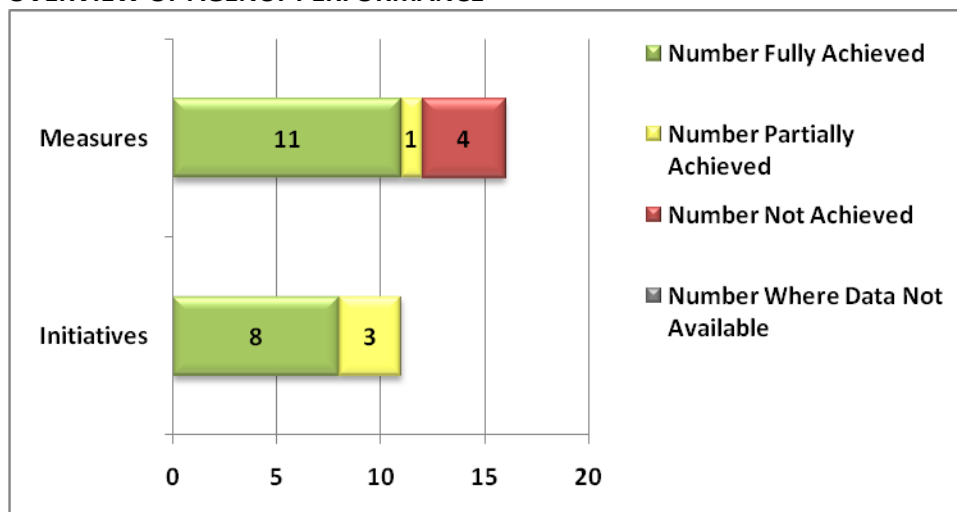
AGENCY OBJECTIVES

1. Provide efficient and effective regulatory and compliance processes.
2. Protect the health and safety of people who visit, live and work in the District of Columbia.
3. Encourage economic growth in neighborhoods and improve the quality of life of residents through licensure and code compliance.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Publication of Construction Codes (DCMR 12) on December 26, 2008 (subsequent launch of Third Party Inspections Program and inception of the CCCB)
- ✓ Used Car Lot Enforcement (Sweeps, Inter-agency coordination, towing cars, unlicensed dealer operations were issued fines, and new regulations were developed)
- ✓ Successfully launched the District's first "pilot" proactive inspections program, completing over 250 inspections in multi-family dwellings
- ✓ General Business License category created (business identification, outreach, enforcement sweeps)

OVERVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE





Performance Initiatives – Assessment Details

Performance Assessment Key:

- Fully achieved ● Partially achieved ● Not achieved ● Data not reported

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE REGULATORY AND COMPLIANCE PROCESSES.

INITIATIVE 1.1: Extend permitting functions into the community with a focus on green building advantages.

In October 2008, DCRA opened a Virtual Permit Center offering a popular District online service, DCRA's "Postcard Permit" for home improvements. The center is located at a Home Depot store in Ward 5 for convenience to home improvement professionals.

For the first time, District residents and licensed contractors planning home improvement projects can get both the materials they need, and the required permits, all in one trip. Permit applicants can also take advantage of Home Depot's extended, seven-day-a-week service hours: 6 am-10 pm Monday-Saturday and 8 am-7 pm Sunday.

INITIATIVE 1.2: Expand and refine the "consolidated citywide Permit Center" with sister agencies.

DDOE, DOH and DDOT have onsite review daily in the Permit Center. WASA personnel are available 2 days per week to review submitted plans. In an effort to consolidate the process, in March 2010, WASA as well as our other sister agencies will all have onsite reviewers available in the Permit Center daily.

INITIATIVE 1.3: Expand web-based permitting services.

DCRA is still working on the launch of the EZ Permit; however, postcard permits and supplemental permits are available through our online application process.

INITIATIVE 1.4: Develop Interactive Voice Routing (IVR) system for inspection scheduling unit.

DCRA expects to launch the IVR application in November 2009.

- The IVR implementation began in FY 2009 but was pushed back to due to delays with the awarding of the contract.

- The configuration will be completed by 12/17/09

- User testing will begin on 12/18/09.

- The full implementation will launch in January 2010.

- Once in production the IVR system will allow a customer to schedule a permit-based inspection or retrieve the status of an inspection via phone, 24 hours per day.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PEOPLE WHO VISIT, LIVE AND WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

INITIATIVE 2.1: Implement an agency-wide proactive inspections and compliance program.



The Pilot Phase was fully achieved, launching in May 2009 and was completed on September 30, 2009. Four to six contract inspectors completed 264 initial building inspections during this phase.

INITIATIVE 2.2: Streamline the Basic Business Licensing process and improve communication with customers.

DCRA began to improve the Basic Business License website and online license issuance and renewal and will continue to do so during FY2010. This will supplement the agency's recent efforts to offer some license renewals online. In addition, the Regulatory Investigations Division and Business License Division have recently increased their efforts to bring businesses with lapsed licenses or who are unlicensed into compliance through the Business License Process.

INITIATIVE 2.3: Improve auto-related consumer experiences through improved Consumer Protection regulations and programs.

DCRA launched a comprehensive Consumer Protection website to capture complaints from customers as well as recognition for "good" businesses. This included highlighting both auto repair shops and home improvement contractors.

INITIATIVE 2.4: Develop a Building Code advisory process.

The Construction Codes Coordinating Board was established by Mayor's Order 2009-22 on February 25, 2009. The board's primary function is to review the various aspects of the District of Columbia Construction Codes found in District of Columbia Municipal Regulations 12A-J. This Board consists of 13 members. Currently there are 11 Board Members, 2 vacancies and a Chairperson as ex-officio. There are 13 standing Technical Advisory Group (TAG) subcommittees established by the Board. Each subcommittee is chaired by a CCCB member. Members of the TAG subcommittees become voting members when the CCCB approves their membership by majority vote. Each group is established to address a section of construction code relative to the scope of the Board's purpose.

Board meetings are scheduled to meet on the third Wednesday of the month. The first meeting of the Board was held on July 22nd, 2009. Meetings of the CCCB are held once a month with the occasional Special Meeting or Ad Hoc committee meetings scheduled when and as required of the Board. Since July, the Board has established its' bylaws and procedures, nominated many TAG members to subcommittees, and have formulated the processes for which code recommendations can be made by volunteer and District code professionals who are known to the District as effective code representatives. The first major task of this Board will be the review and recommendation of the 2010 District of Columbia Construction Code as a District-wide construction code. This is a process that is expected to take 8-10 months and to generate a revised 400+ pages of code amendments that are up-to-date and have received an exceptional margin of professional, technical review.

Transparency is important to the CCCB, and efforts are underway toward the release of a completely electronic version of the DC Construction Codes through the DC Office of Documents that are convenient and accessible to the public via the web. Using readily available technologies the Board has reduced costs related to operations such as voice recording of CCCB meetings as public record and using email to communicate between board meetings, instead of using postal mail for communications.



OBJECTIVE 3: ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH IN NEIGHBORHOODS AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF RESIDENTS THROUGH LICENSURE AND CODE COMPLIANCE.

INITIATIVE 3.1: Enhance and streamline enforcement process.

- DCRA issued an Administrative Issuance to guide the processes involved with abating code violations and collecting the fines. Specifically, the issuance addressed identifying violations where abatement was appropriate, and inspection and abatement processes for emergency and nonemergency violations.

INITIATIVE 3.2: Develop a comprehensive strategy to bring vacant and blighted properties back to productive use through coordination with sister agencies.

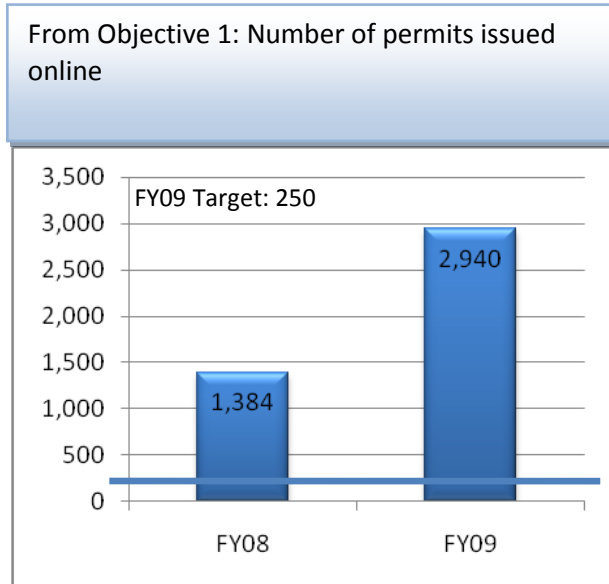
- DCRA continued the work that began in FY2008 by coordinating with other agencies on a comprehensive strategy to address putting vacant properties back into productive use. The agency referred 20 properties to DHCD's "Homestead Program," and explored a partnership with DHCD to receive grants to rehab several vacant properties as part of "lead abatement" program. Finally, DCRA forwarded three Demolition by Neglect cases to the Office of the Attorney General.

INITIATIVE 3.3: Coordinate with sister agencies to improve building stock in Focus Improvement Areas (FIAs) through comprehensive inspections (residential, commercial, and vacant property).

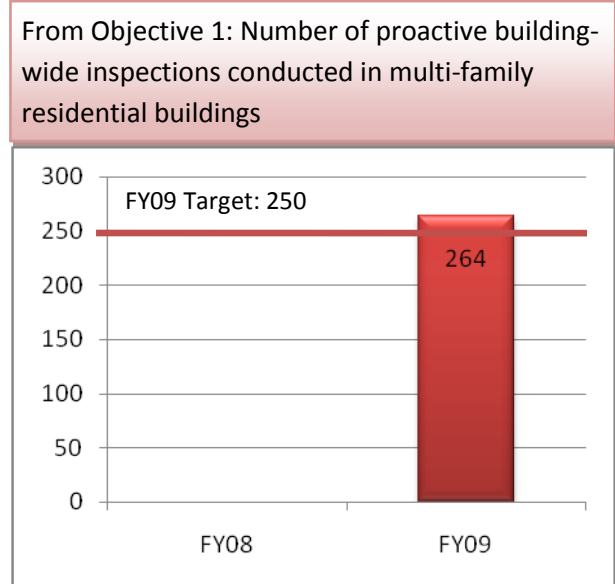
- DCRA worked with the Office of the City Administrator to provide updates into Quickbase after Focus Improvement Areas were surveyed and notices were served on owners. When appropriate, DCRA abated code violations on properties in these areas, especially in coordination with MPD during the All Hands on Deck weekends.



Key Performance Indicators – Highlights



FULLY ACHIEVED



FULLY ACHIEVED

More About These Indicators:

How did the agency's actions affect this indicator?

- Launched the first online permitting kiosks at the Home Depot.
- The number of online permits issued more than doubled from 1,384 in FY08 to 2,940 in FY09 due to outreach and publicity.
- Provided an option to apply for, pay for, and print supplemental permits from home.

What external factors influenced this indicator?

- Demand for online government services grew.
- An increase in renovation projects required supplemental (electrical etc.) permits.
- Small projects, such as interior renovations under 5,000 square feet contributed to a 37% increase in supplemental permits.

How did the agency's actions affect this indicator?

- Successfully inspected over 250 multi-family dwellings (3 to 49 units).
- Identified over 1,200 routine property maintenance and building code violations.
- Encouraged property owners/landlords and tenants to comply voluntarily with housing regulations.

What external factors influenced this indicator?

- In the past, some housing code violations were not reported by tenants. Unrepaired violations further deteriorate causing major life, safety and health conditions.
- Increased familiarity of landlords and tenants with the proactive inspections program will improve participation and result in better living conditions for the District's residents.



Key Performance Indicators – Details

Performance Assessment Key:

● Fully achieved
 ● Partially achieved
 ● Not achieved
 ● Data not reported

| | Measure Name | FY2008 YE Actual | FY2009 YE Target | FY2009 YE Revised Target ¹ | FY2009 YE Actual | FY2009 YE Rating | Budget Program |
|---|---|------------------------|------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| ● | 1.1 % of customers satisfied with DCRA customer service | 77 | 80 | | 89.47% | 111.84% | ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES |
| ● | 1.2 # of permits issued online | 0 | 250 | 2000 | 3598 | 179.90% | PERMITTING |
| ● | 1.3 % of customer calls agency-wide received by IVR | 0 | 30 | | | 0% | ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES |
| ● | 1.4 # of permits issued at virtual Permit Center kiosks | 0 | 100 | | 142 | 142% | PERMITTING |
| ● | 1.5 % of building plan reviews completed within identified timeframes | 0 | 95 | | 78.03% | 82.14% | PERMITTING |
| ● | 1.6 # of complaint-related inspections conducted | 38440 | 38000 | | 16221 | 234.26% | INSPECTION |
| ● | 2.1 % of basic business licenses processed online | 0 | 40 | | 1.54% | 3.85% | LICENSING |
| ● | 2.2 % of consumer protection complaints resolved within 90 days | 64 | 75 | | 77.16% | 102.88% | LICENSING |

¹ Agencies have been permitted to change their targets as long as 1) the original targets are published in the PAR, as they are here, and 2) a strong justification was presented for the change.

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|---|-----|---|----|-----|--------|---------|------------------------------------|
| ● | 2.3 | # of proactive building-wide inspections conducted in multi-family residential buildings | 0 | 250 | 264 | 105.60% | INSPECTION |
| ● | 2.4 | % of illegal construction inspections completed within 24 hours | 75 | 85 | 54.67% | 64.31% | ZONING AND CONSTRUCTION COMPLIANCE |
| ● | 2.5 | % reduction in auto-related consumer complaints | 13 | 10 | 14.13% | 70.78% | LICENSING |
| ● | 3.1 | # of vacant properties registered in FIAs | 0 | 70 | 175 | 250% | INSPECTION |
| ● | 3.2 | # of vacant housing units brought into compliance and/or alternative corrective methods to remove blighted conditions | 83 | 85 | 475 | 558.82% | ENFORCEMENT |
| ● | 3.3 | # of cases referred to OAG for criminal prosecution | 0 | 25 | 42 | 168% | ENFORCEMENT |
| ● | 3.4 | # of vacant properties cases forwarded to the Home Again and Homestead Programs | 0 | 20 | 20 | 100% | ENFORCEMENT |
| ● | 3.5 | # of vacant properties cases forwarded to OAG for demolition by neglect | 0 | 3 | 3 | 100% | ENFORCEMENT |