

# Memorandum



**Date:** February 6, 2014

**To:** Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carlos A. Gimenez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Subject:** Resolution Requesting a Report Outlining the Best Methodology and Implementation Schedule to Streamline the Permitting and Inspection Process

On September 4, 2013, the Board passed Resolution No. R-709-13 directing the Mayor or his designee to prepare a report outlining the best methodology and implementation schedule to streamline and enhance the efficiency, customer service, and accountability of the Miami-Dade County permitting and inspection processes, including but not limited to the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources (RER) and the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (MDFR) processes, so as to encourage and foster growth, development, and improvements for businesses and residential properties in Miami-Dade County. The Resolution delineates specific items that should be reviewed and enhanced to increase efficiency and accountability in the process.

The attached report details areas that were reviewed as requested by the resolution and corresponding responses from RER, MDFR, Public Works and Waste Management (PWWM), and the Water and Sewer Department (WASD). It should be noted that regular meetings are held with members of the industry and management staff of the various departments involved in the permitting process in an effort to have a better understanding of industry concerns and to identify improvements that are required to streamline the process.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Jack Osterholt, Deputy Mayor/Director, RER, should you have any questions.

## Attachment

c: Office of the Mayor Senior Staff  
Dave Downey, Fire Chief  
John Renfrow, Director, WASD  
Antonio Cotarelo, P.E., County Engineer  
Juliana Salas, P.E., Building Official  
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor

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- 1. When a permit is issued for a property there should be one inspector per trade who should complete all inspections for that property until the permit is closed out.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

Timely inspections are very important to patrons that hold active permits since inspection approval is required to allow construction progress. The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources has an inspection policy that ensures that inspections requested by 4:00 pm are performed the next business day. RER does not have a limit to the amount of inspections that can be requested and less than 0.10% of the inspections requested are carried over beyond the next business day.

Each trade inspector is assigned a geographical territory for the purpose of performing inspections. The department has an automated system which assigns the inspections by trade and geographical area, thus ensuring the same inspector performs inspections throughout the lifespan of the project with the following exceptions:

- When an inspector is no longer employed, the new inspector assigned to the territory performs the inspection.
- When an inspector is out on leave, the inspection is assigned to another inspector in an abutting territory or to a supervisor.
- If an inspector in a specific territory on a given day receives more inspections than reasonably can be completed, the inspections may be reassigned to another inspector or supervisor for completion.

It should be noted that permit holders (contractors/owners) can view and monitor the status of inspections through RER's web site. Information provided includes the inspector assigned to the inspection, his or her picture for security purposes, the order the inspection is on the route and the result of the inspection performed. If a permit holder has a concern with reference to the inspector assigned, or order of the inspection, the Inspector Section Supervisor can be contacted.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

In response to the Resolution, Miami Dade Fire Rescue Department has begun utilizing RER's inspection policy that ensures that inspections requested by 4:00 pm are performed the next business day. Prior to December 10th, 2013 MDFR would place a cap on the number of inspections scheduled on a daily basis and customers would have until 3:00 pm to schedule inspections for the next business day. With the implementation of the carryover inspection process, the department will increase the number of inspections that can be requested. New construction fire inspections are very dynamic and will require MDFR to closely monitor this new process to evaluate the number of inspections requested that are a carryover beyond the next business day. The inspection scheduling time frame was also increased by one hour. This process is concurrent with RER's inspection request process.

Regarding specific inspectors, each new construction fire inspector is assigned to a particular team within a geographical district for the purpose of performing inspections. By having inspectors assigned to a particular team within a geographical district, the department can assure consistency with the inspection processes (More on this is also provided below in response to Item #2- new Lead Worker positions).

MDFR will need to coordinate with ITD to further enhance the current automated system with oversight from the Lead Workers to assign inspections by geographical district, thus ensuring the same inspection team performs the inspections throughout the duration of a particular project. The primary goal when scheduling an inspection will be for the same inspector to perform inspections throughout the lifespan of the project with the following exceptions:

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- When an inspector is no longer employed, the new inspector assigned to the team performs the inspection.
- When the inspection is scheduled for a day that is not the inspector's regular work day or an inspector is out on leave, the inspection is assigned to another inspector within the same team or to a supervisor.
- If an inspector in a specific territory on a given day receives more inspections than reasonably can be completed, the inspections may be reassigned to another member assigned to the same team in that geographical district, to another team in that geographical district or to the supervisor for completion.

MDFR expects this new scheduling procedure to be developed and implemented in Fiscal Year 2014-15

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

The Public Works and Waste Management Department (PWWM) has an inspection policy that ensures inspections requested by 4:00 pm are performed the next business day. Inspections can be requested via the PWWM departmental web page, by phone or fax. PWWM does not have a limit to the amount of inspections that can be requested and less than 0.10% of the inspections requested are a carryover beyond the next business day.

Each PWWM inspector is assigned a geographical territory for the purpose of performing inspections. The department has an automated system which assigns the inspections by geographical district, thus ensuring the same inspector performs inspections throughout the lifespan of the project with the following exceptions:

- When an inspector is no longer employed, the new inspector assigned to the territory performs the inspection.
- When an inspector is out on leave, the inspection is assigned to another inspector in an abutting territory or to a supervisor.
- If an inspector in a specific territory on a given day receives more inspections than reasonably can be completed, the inspections may be reassigned to another inspector or supervisor for completion.

It should be noted that permit holders (contractors/owners) receive inspection results when the inspection is requested via the web portal. If a permit holder has a concern with reference to the inspector assigned or an issue with the inspection itself, the Chief Inspector can be contacted.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

Unlike RER and MDFR whose personnel inspect the parcel and structures, the Water and Sewer Department (WASD) inspects the construction of mains leading to the property (in the case of water mains and service lines to the water meter) and away from the property (in the case of sewer laterals, gravity mains, pump stations, and force mains). All developer donation construction projects for water and sewer mains begin with an on-site pre-construction meeting with responsible parties, including WASD's inspector and supervisor. All contact information for the life of the construction project is provided during that meeting. The same inspector is assigned for the duration of the construction through final acceptance, unless that inspector is out on leave or no longer in the position. When needed, the contractor requests an inspection by calling the assigned inspector. Requested WASD inspections are performed on the same day or by the next business day. Further, because the mains are designed and built to WASD standards (and later developer-donated and become a part of WASD's system), our design and plans engineers are also readily available to respond to any developer, contractor or inspector project query. Please note that WASD does not inspect private water and sewer pipes; rather, plumbing pipes are inspected by RER.

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2. Each inspector should have a supervisor who should actively oversee the permitting and inspection process. If a property owner or business owner is given inconsistent information or direction at any time, a supervisor should be notified and be in charge of resolving the inconsistency.

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

Inspectors on each trade report to Field Unit Supervisors who monitor inspection quality and workload as well as respond to customer complaints. Each Field Unit Supervisor is assigned approximately six (6) inspectors. This ratio of inspector to Field Unit Supervisor optimizes supervision and quality control of inspection results. Field Unit Supervisors respond to the Trade Section Supervisor who in turn responds to a Division Director.

The Field Unit Supervisor performs quality control by routinely riding with inspectors with the purpose of verifying:

- Quality of inspections performed
- Efficient ordering of route
- Carrying appropriate tools (radios, devices, etc.). Wearing proper attire (uniform, safety shoes, identification)
- Interaction at job site with permit holder (contractors/property owners)
- Cleanliness of vehicle

The quality control evaluation is reviewed with the inspector and by management staff. Additionally, Field Unit Supervisors may alternatively follow an inspector's route and make contact at the job site to review the quality of the inspection and the interaction of the inspector with the permit holder. Results of this follow-up are reviewed with the inspector and management staff.

RER affords the customer the opportunity to meet with a supervisor or division director with reference to inspection concerns. RER has an open door policy which allows patrons to walk in without an appointment to meet with an Inspection Supervisor or Division Director. Additionally, patrons can phone or e-mail management staff.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

In response to the Resolution, effective September 2013 MDFR has implemented two Lead Worker positions. Fire Inspectors report to a Lead Worker who will monitor inspection quality and workload as well as respond to customer complaints. Each Lead worker is assigned approximately seven (7) inspectors. This ratio of inspector to Lead Worker optimizes supervision and quality control of inspection results. Lead Workers respond directly to the Fire Engineering Bureau Officer in Charge (OIC) who in turn responds to the Fire Prevention Division Chief.

The Lead Worker performs quality control by routinely riding with inspectors with the purpose of verifying:

- Quality of inspections performed
- Efficient ordering of route
- Wearing proper attire (uniform, safety shoes, identification)
- Interaction at job site with project manager (contractors/property owners)
- Cleanliness of vehicle

The quality control evaluation is reviewed with the inspector and Bureau OIC. Additionally, Lead Workers may alternatively follow an inspector's route and make contact at the job site to review the quality of the inspection and the interaction of the inspector with the permit holder. Results of this follow-up are reviewed with the inspector and Bureau OIC.

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MDFR will be implementing a new procedure in May 2014 that will afford the customer the opportunity to meet with an Inspector(s) to answer questions regarding inspection concerns in the morning from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. before the beginning of their daily inspections. The department has an open door policy which allows patrons to walk in without an appointment to meet with a Lead Worker or the Bureau OIC. Additionally, patrons can phone or e-mail management staff.

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

PWWM has a Project Inspector 2 that oversees the daily field operations. The PWWM Project Inspector 2 is the Countywide Utility inspector and is responsible to oversee three (3) project inspectors in the field. This ratio of lead inspector to field inspectors optimizes supervision and quality control of inspection results. The PWWM Project Inspector 2 responds directly to the Chief Inspector who oversees inspections and permitting for PWWM.

The Department ensures quality by:

- Chief Inspector performing follow up inspections or meeting in the field with the inspector to ensure quality
- PWWM Project Inspector 2 efficiently assigns inspections and service requests daily
- Chief Inspector ensures employees wear proper attire (safety shoes, identification)
- Cleanliness of vehicle

The quality control evaluation is reviewed with the inspector and by management staff. Additionally, the Chief Inspector may alternatively follow an inspector's route and make contact at the job site to review the quality of the inspection and the interaction of the inspector with the permit holder. Results of this follow-up are reviewed with the inspector and management staff.

The department affords the customer the opportunity to meet with the Chief Inspector or County Engineer with reference to inspection concerns. The department has an open door policy which allows patrons to walk in without an appointment to meet with the Chief Inspector or County Engineer. Additionally, patrons can phone or e-mail management staff.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

As above stated, all developer donation construction projects for water and sewer mains begin with an on-site pre-construction meeting with responsible parties, including WASD's inspector and supervisor. All contact information for the life of the construction project is provided during that meeting. Although contractors are parties to the pre-construction meetings, owners, developers and Engineers of Record are not routinely a part of the meetings nor are they routinely a part of the corresponding "project progress" emails sent out by WASD. For better communication and project coordination, in addition to the contractor, WASD will now start to collect contact information (particularly email addresses) and routinely include the owners, developers and Engineers of Record on the "project progress" emails. WASD provides two Construction Project Supervisor I's for projects – one covering north of Flagler Street and one south of Flagler Street. Each Construction Project Supervisor I oversees four (4) inspectors. The Construction Project Supervisor I's report to a Construction Manager II, who reports to a Construction Manager III, who in turn reports to the Chief of WASD Construction Management Division. From the beginning of the project at the pre-construction meeting, contractors are provided with the supervisor's contact information for resolving any inconsistencies. The Construction Management Division also has an open door policy which allows contractors and owners to meet with management at any level in the chain of authority. Further, WASD inspection supervisors also coordinate closely with WASD's permitting and plans approval staff to ensure the project is accurately built for the benefit of the developer and department for ongoing water and sewer operation.

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- 3. Implementation of a system in which each inspector should create a written report of what is told to a business or property owner during each inspection. The supervisor assigned to that inspector should review and sign-off on the report. If there are any inconsistencies between any reports created throughout the inspection process for an open permit, the supervisor should be notified and should be in charge of resolving the inconsistency.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

RER provides patrons access to the status and results of inspections through the department's "Today's Routes and Results" website feature. The results are available real time as the inspections are performed. The system requires the inspector to enter an inspection result and provides for written comments. The inspection results and comments are immediately available to the permit holder and management staff within the department. Supervisors monitor the inspection results throughout the day and have the ability to contact the inspector in the field with reference to results.

Additionally, since patrons monitor the status of inspections, they also have the ability to immediately contact a supervisor to request clarification of the inspection result, or express concerns relating to the inspection or inspector. This contact can be made through e-mail, telephone, or an in person visit.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

MDFR provides patrons access to the status and results of inspections through the department's "Today's Routes and Results" website feature. The results are available real time as the inspections are performed. The system requires the inspector to enter an inspection result and provides for written comments. The inspection results and comments are immediately available to the permit holder and management staff within the department. Lead workers monitor the inspection results throughout the day and have the ability to contact the inspector in the field with reference to results.

MDFR will be implementing a new procedure in March 2014. MDFR inspector(s) will distribute information cards at the conclusion of an inspection providing the project manager the name of his/her supervisor, the supervisor's contact information, to provide clarification to any questions from the inspection result, or express concerns relating to the inspection or the actual inspector. This contact can be made through e-mail, telephone, or in person. (Please refer to Item #4 -Information cards).

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

The department provides patrons electronic status and results of inspections when an email address is provided. If patrons provide no email address, the patron can always call the permitting office and receive the results of the inspection. The system requires the inspector to enter an inspection result and provide for written comments. Inspectors physically write the inspection results on the posted permitting documents, additionally, inspectors will enter the results in the field, if an email address is provided, the results will be sent to the permittee instantly. The inspection results and comments are immediately available to the permit holder and management staff within the department.

Additionally, patrons have the ability to immediately contact a supervisor to request clarification of the inspection result, or express concerns relating to the inspection or inspector. This contact can be made through e-mail, telephone, or an in person visit.

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### *Water and Sewer Department*

WASD water and sewer mains inspections are not pass/fail inspections; rather, they are progress inspections. WASD only stops the progress of developers building water and sewer mains when the inspector and supervisor determine that a safety issue needs to be resolved or there is a threat to the public health. When written comments are needed, the Supervisor prepares and emails the comments to the parties identified in the pre-construction meeting. Private parties constructing the mains are routinely aware of WASD supervisory contact information.

- 4. Whenever an inspector goes to complete an inspection, said inspector should inform the business or property owner of the name of his/her supervisor, the supervisor's contact information, and that the business or property owner can contact the supervisor if he/she is not satisfied with the inspector's service.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

The department is steadfast in efforts to build customer relationships. These efforts have been concentrated on making the department's operations as transparent as possible by allowing customer interaction with the department via the internet to request service or access information.

Supervisors, Division Directors and other management staff's contact information including phone number and e-mail are available through the department's website. The inspector's name, picture and phone number is available through the Today's Routes and Results system.

The department, in order to augment communication with the permit holder, has enhanced the Today's Routes and Results system to provide the supervisor and Division Director's name, telephone number and e-mail address. This will allow the permit holder to provide, both, positive and negative feedback relating to the quality of the inspection or the performance of the inspector. This enhancement became effective January 27, 2014.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

The fire department provides patrons access to the status and results of inspections through the department's "Today's Routes and Results" website feature. The results are available real time as the inspections are performed. The system requires the inspector to enter an inspection result and provides for written comments. The inspection results and comments are immediately available to the permit holder and management staff within the department. Lead workers monitor the inspection results throughout the day and have the ability to contact the inspector in the field with reference to results.

As noted above, MDFR will be implementing a new procedure in May 2014. MDFR inspector(s) will distribute information cards at the conclusion of an inspection providing the project manager the name of his/her supervisor, the supervisor's contact information, to provide clarification to any questions from the inspection result, or express concerns relating to the inspection or the actual inspector. This contact can be made through e-mail, telephone, or in person.

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

Due to the nature of Public Works and Waste Management Department permits (land development, site work, and utility installation in public right-of-way), permit holders and/or requestors of inspections are not

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always present during the inspection. However, if the permittee provides contact information requesting a field meeting during the inspection, the inspector will notify the permit holder and meet in the field at the time of the inspection.

Additionally, the permits have the office number provided for customers to contact the permit or inspection section if there are any questions. Inspectors provide the supervisors information if requested by the permittee. The permit office forwards calls concerning inspections to the supervisor for clarification or questions about the inspection result.

Contact information of Supervisors, Division Directors and other management staff's including phone number and e-mail are available through the department's website.

The department is steadfast in efforts to build customer relationships. These efforts have been concentrated on making the department's operations as transparent as possible by allowing customer interaction with the department via the internet to request service or access information.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

WASD provides all of the supervisor contact information to the private parties at the outset of the project at the on-site pre-construction meeting.

- 5. All supervisors and inspectors, including but not limited to those from the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources and the Fire Rescue Department, should complete customer service training.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

As part of the department's customer service initiatives, the department requires that all inspectors complete customer service excellence training. Additionally, customer service etiquette such as greeting the public with a courteous attitude and treating people with respect are reinforced with inspection staff by their supervisors.

The department actively encourages patrons to provide feedback on employee performance through customer service surveys, e-mail, correspondence, telephone, or in person meetings.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

As part of the department's customer service initiatives, the department requires that all inspectors complete customer service excellence training. Additionally, customer service etiquette such as greeting the public with a courteous attitude and treating people with respect are reinforced with inspection staff by their supervisors.

The department is actively creating new customer service surveys so that patrons can provide both, positive and negative feedback relating to the quality of the inspection or the performance of the actual inspector. MDFR customer service surveys will be distributed beginning May 2014. Feedback provided by the customer surveys will be utilized in the development of the curriculum for future training programs. The department encourages feedback on employee performance through e-mail, correspondence, telephone, or in person meetings.

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### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

As part of the department's customer service initiatives, the department requires that all inspectors complete an online ethics course. Additionally, customer service etiquette such as greeting the public with a courteous attitude and treating people with respect are reinforced with inspection staff by their supervisors. In response to the resolution the department will require inspection staff and other frontline employees to complete a customer service training class on an annual basis to reinforce customer service skills.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

WASD's inspectors and supervisors do not receive customer service training at this time. The department is reviewing how customer service training can be provided and the resources necessary to do so.

- 6. Create a physical one-stop information and processing center for pulling permits and calling for inspection in Miami-Dade County, including but not limited to the permitting and inspection processes of the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources and the Fire Rescue Department.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

The Miami-Dade County Permitting and Inspection Center (MDPIC) is the gateway for the permitting and inspection process. Staff from RER that is directly involved with providing plan review or inspections services (Building, Zoning, Environmental Resources and Public Works) are physically located at the MDPIC as well as plan review staff from WASD, MDR and the State of Florida Department of Health. In order to further enhance inspection services, the department has made space available at MDPIC for the relocation of Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Inspectors.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

MDR is currently co-located at the MDPIC with other agencies that service the Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA). Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department (MDR) is in the process of re-locating its New Construction Inspectors to the MDPIC to establish cohesiveness within the plans review/inspection process. MDR expects this transition to be completed by May 2014.

MDR has a large customer service base that includes the 29 municipalities within the fire rescue service district. The resolution calls for "outlining the best methodology and implementation schedule to streamline and enhance the efficiency, customer service, and accountability of the Miami-Dade County permitting and inspection processes" and "...so as to encourage and foster growth, development, and improvements for businesses and residential properties in Miami-Dade County;" MDR believes that the spirit of the resolution is to be inclusive of all the business and residential properties served by RER and MDR. The 29 municipalities have their own building departments that do not fall within the County's permitting process jurisdiction nor do all municipal plans have to be reviewed by other County agencies located within the MDPIC outside of MDR. Effective October 2013, RER has implemented Concurrent Plans Processing (CPP) with the Town of Miami Lakes, which allows plans to be reviewed electronically by necessary County agencies without the customer having to travel to the MDPIC center to drop off and/or pick up plans. CPP submittals are reviewed concurrently by all necessary County agencies, therefore eliminating time lost in plans routing by both the customer and agencies. MDR makes every effort to review CPP submittals within 24 hours, however depending on the complexity of the project the review can take up to three (3) business days. We encourage other municipal Building Departments to implement this efficient way of plans

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processing and increase overall customer satisfaction and customer service experience. MDFR is currently evaluating different programs to further enhance the review process for CPP submittals.

MDFR currently offers off-site plan review twice a week to serve the most populated municipalities; serving the City of Doral and all surrounding cities near the City of Sunny Isles Beach. Customers have the ability to register their plans, pay up-front fees and have plans reviewed by MDFR within a timely manner and returned to customers the same business day at no additional expense to the department. This benefits the citizens that live in these particular areas without having to travel to one remote location.

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

Starting October 1, 2012, the PWWM permitting office in the MDPIC was placed under the supervision of RER as part of the County reorganization. This group issues permits for improvements on private property which are closely coordinated with Divisions within RER such as the Environmental Resources Management, Zoning, and Building, all of which are located within the MDPIC building in West Dade.

PWWM maintains the permitting group at the SPCC which handles permit applications and approvals within the public right-of-way and issues permits to utilities (power, gas, water and sewer, and telecommunications), RER Land Development infrastructure improvements (located downtown at the SPCC), and traffic signals/controls. This office routes documents that must be reviewed and coordinated closely with various PWWM Divisions located in the same SPCC building downtown such as the Roadway Engineering and Right-of-Way Division, Special Taxing District Division, Traffic Engineering and Traffic Signals and Signs Division.

PWWM has four (4) inspectors in the field that conduct inspections for both the public right-of-way and private property. The Chief inspector that oversees the Downtown permitting office and field inspectors works closely with RER to ensure consistency and coordination for daily operations.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

Permits that allow owners to build water and sewer infrastructure and connect to WASD's water and sewer system are issued from the MDPIC, the Overtown Transit Village building, and WASD's LeJeune Road offices as the WASD water and sewer system extends countywide. Plans are reviewed by staff and permits are issued. Our practice is to have the same staff member review re-submitted plans and permit applications for the sake of continuity. Disapproval comments are always in writing. Inspections are coordinated from the LeJeune Road offices where most WASD construction program engineers, plans reviewers, and inspectors are located. Close coordination at the LeJeune Road offices is required so projects built by developers and conveyed to WASD are completed to standards for ongoing operation as part of the WASD system.

- 7. Review the manner in which inspectors are trained, including but not limited to the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources and the Fire Rescue Department inspectors, and increase or enhance the training of these inspectors so as to reconcile any inconsistencies between inspections in Miami-Dade County.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

All inspectors are either Florida licensed engineers, architects or contractors. Inspection staff must also possess the appropriate certification from the State of Florida, Building Code Administrators and Inspection Board. Local certification from Miami-Dade County Board of Rules and Appeals is also required by the

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Chapter 8 of the Code of Miami-Dade County. In order to maintain the local certification, inspectors must complete 16 hours of continuing education every year. This is in addition to continuing education requirements that are mandatory to retain their specific license (professional or contractor).

In addition to the required technical training, the department is committed to promoting an environment geared toward organizational and employee learning. To that effect, employees are encouraged to participate in county programs designed for employee development. The department offers internal workshops, cross training opportunities and on the job training to enhance delivery of services.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

All MDFR inspectors are State certified Life-safety Inspectors, have a minimum of four years fire ground experience and have demonstrated leadership and judgment as officers. Inspectors entering the Fire Marshal's office must follow a training regimen that, on average, takes 2 years to complete. All are members of the Florida Fire Marshals and Inspectors Association (FFMIA) and attend regular training sessions provided by FFMIA. Inspectors also attend training to maintain their certifications as required by FSS 633 as well as in-house training workshops.

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

All PWWM inspectors hold a Certificate of Competency by the Construction Trades Qualifying Board under the Paving, Excavating and Grading, and Administrative Categories. In order to maintain the local certification, inspectors must complete 16 hours of continuing education every two years. Inspection staff meets bi-monthly to discuss inspections and investigations and share information about the last two (2) weeks in order to closely coordinate inspection efforts. Customer complaints or concerns are discussed openly to avoid similar issues in the future.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

With regard to training, WASD water and sewer main construction inspectors must have four (4) years of experience in pipeline construction. After hiring, ongoing training is provided on numerous topics such as: safety, ethics, Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) requirements, construction coordination and compaction techniques, pipe tapping, chlorination, pressure testing, and other related construction trade trainings. Although work experience is required to become a WASD construction inspector, licensure is not. WASD will review whether construction licensure as a requirement for new hires should be considered for implementation.

- 8. Any other changes that would streamline and enhance the efficiency, customer service, and accountability of the Miami-Dade County permitting and inspection processes, particularly, but not limited to the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources and the Fire Rescue Department processes.**

### *Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources*

As of November 25, 2013, RER streamlined the inspection process by combining the zoning and landscaping inspection with the final building inspection. This will provide efficiency by reducing the number of inspection trips. Additionally, patrons will have a single point of contact for these inspections in the Building Inspector. Further the process was automated utilizing the same system that is in place for other trade inspections noted above as Today's Routes and Results.

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Additionally, the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources and the Information Technology Department have reviewed the various procedural and system issues that were restricting the ability to have extended web payment hours for services such as the payment of re-inspection, permit and enforcement fees. Changes are being made to allow the daily acceptance of web payments between the hours of 12:30 am to 11:30 pm and this will be effective March 2014.

Finally, RER is working with ITD to establish a single permitting and code enforcement IT solution, not just within RER, but Countywide. RER currently uses numerous separate systems to support its permitting and code enforcement functions. A new single system will allow for the retirement of systems that are at the end of their life cycle, and thereby reduce the IT maintenance costs necessary to support older technology solutions. A new system will also allow for cost efficient information sharing among permitting and code enforcement agencies, both within RER, as well as with other County Departments and municipalities, and enable improvements to the permit application and code enforcement process.

### *Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department*

MDFR is currently working on enhanced use of technologies to streamline the disposition of inspections, requesting of inspections and routing of inspectors. MDFR is also working on enhancing its web presence with more customer service tools. Some of these website enhancements will include direct contact for inspectors and supervisors, opportunities for customers to provide direct feedback/suggestions and the overall improvement of navigational tools for fire related links regarding plans review and inspections. These enhancements are expected to be developed and implemented in Fiscal Year 2014-15. In addition, MDFR will develop a training program for all inspectors to enhance their knowledge. MDFR will also continue to work closely with other municipalities to encourage the use of electronic plan submittals as noted above, while establishing close communication practices on plan review and inspection processes.

### *Public Works and Waste Management Department*

PWWM continues to develop and implement further WEB/online capabilities to provide more customer service tools. Utility companies are now able to upload and apply for utility permits online including the uploading of plans, applications, specifications and other documents. Utility permits submitted online are a paperless process and reviewed electronically. PWWM will continue to improve online tools to include:

- Online status of permits and inspection results.
- Online permit management (pay for permits, extend permits, pay for re-inspections, etc.)
- Register online users via the web to submit for PWWM permits (driveways, landscaping, etc.)
- PWWM Permit GIS Map providing all permitted documents via a GIS portal.

Permitting is a customer based operation and the department is constantly looking at ways to improve the processes by meeting with customers, inspectors and permitting staff. Permitting and inspection staff evaluates complaints and evaluates the process when concerns are received in order to improve the system and process.

### *Water and Sewer Department*

With the improving local development economy and to be positioned to handle the increasing volume of developer construction projects being submitted to the Department, WASD is initiating a number of service improvements. WASD is taking steps to both improve customer service and timely deliver the services that the developers depend on to build and convey new water and sewer mains to WASD. These initiatives include:

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- Nurturing a “Customer friendly” versus “Applicant” culture between WASD staff and developers
- Reaching out to planned developments at early stages to encourage developers to submit the projects early so the underground infrastructure has a chance of being completed earlier and out of the way of site building construction
- Further increasing communication and response to developers by making managers more accessible and providing their contact information (email addresses and phone numbers)
- Proactively interfacing with developers on their evolving project timelines, so that WASD resources can better be aligned to meet the anticipated project completion dates
- Implementing a method to better track overall daily developer construction projects and workload in WASD so that management can timely address any backlogs and bottlenecks
- Increasing transparency on project approval status with developers via revamped web pages
- Identifying ways to reduce the number of times the developer has to submit and re-submit the same plans, applications, etc. for approval thereby lowering the rejection rate
- Analyzing and making each WASD developer project process more efficient leading to the deliverable to developers
- Identifying ways to reduce process steps and redundant and time-consuming work
- Asking developers and WASD staff on how the WASD approval process can be streamlined
- Replacing several out-of-date WASD computer systems with a single, new computer system