

Department of Safety and Permits Inspections Audit

AD-21-0002 • October 20, 2022

Background

The City of New Orleans Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the City of New Orleans' (City) Department of Safety and Permits (S&P). The objective of the audit was to determine if S&P inspectors (City inspectors) conducted their inspections in accordance with S&P policies and procedures. The scope of the audit was all building, mechanical and electrical permit inspections conducted by City inspectors during the period April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020.

Purpose of This Report

The objective of the audit was to determine if City inspectors conducted their inspections in accordance with S&P policies and procedures.

What the OIG Found

The audit resulted in the following major findings:

- City inspectors did not perform in-person inspections for 20% of the inspections selected for review.
- City inspectors did not spend adequate time conducting inspections, spending ten minutes or less for 40% of the inspections reviewed.
- City inspectors did not upload required documentation into LAMA¹ in violation of S&P policies and procedures.

What the OIG Recommended

Based on these findings, the OIG made the following recommendations to the City:

- S&P management should update and enforce S&P policies and procedures in order to ensure that City inspectors are conducting on-site inspections. S&P should also verify on a quarterly basis that GPS is installed and working for all vehicles driven by City inspectors. (The OIG found that GPS data was not available for all S&P vehicles reviewed.)
- S&P should require that City inspectors complete an inspection checklist that details the required steps necessary for each type of inspection. City inspectors should upload the checklist into LAMA to document that a comprehensive inspection was conducted.
- S&P supervisors should perform regular quality checks to ensure City inspectors upload required documentation into LAMA for all inspections.

S&P submitted a written response agreeing with the OIG recommendations in the report. The written response is attached to the Final Report in its entirety.

¹ S&P tracked workflow and stored information related to the building permit process using geographic information system (GIS)-based Land Management software (LAMA).