

Code Enforcement: One recent area of focus for the Development Services Division (DDS) has been in increasing the level of proactive enforcement efforts by both the Local Building Inspectors and the Sanitary Code Inspectors. In addition to dispatching inspectors in response to citizen complaints regarding various code violations, the inspectors are encouraged to follow the “see something, say something” mantra when out on the road conducting their daily inspections. The chart in **Figure 1** highlights the total complaints received by the city in **Fiscal Year 2013**, categorized by source and violation type. Of a grand total of **1,155** total complaints, **50%** (n=577) of the violations were cited and/or addressed due to inspector observation. DDS encourages residents to communicate any potential violations via phone (**978-674-4144**), mail, or online utilizing E-Gov: (<http://www.egovlink.com/lowell/action.asp>) or SeeClickFix (<http://seeclickfix.com/lowell/>)

Figure 1	CURBSIDE RECYCLING	CURBSIDE WASTE	OVERSIZED VEHICLE	PARKING - NON-IMPERVIOUS	SAN CODE VIOLATION	UNREG DUMPSTER	UNREG VEHICLE	VAC/FORECLOSED VIOLATION	ZONING - ILLEGAL USE	ZONING CODE - AUTO REPAIR	Grand Total
NO SOURCE LISTED (NULL)		22				53	2	15			92
AUCTION NOTICE								25			25
CITY MANAGER / CITY COUNCIL	1										1
DPD					1						1
E-GOV LINK		15					21			1	37
EMAIL			1					3			4
FAILURE TO COMPLY							8	187	1		196
INSPECTOR OBSERVATION	2	503			5		50	13	3	1	577
NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES		2									2
OTHER DEPARTMENT							6				6
REPORT FROM REGISTRY								154			154
TELEPHONE CALL		6		5	1		34	2	6		54
USPS MAIL					1			1			2
WALK IN / COUNTER					1		2			1	4
Grand Total	3	548	1	5	9	53	123	400	10	3	1155

Performance Metrics: Customer service is another priority of the DDS. As part of their divisional goals for FY14 (which can be found online [in the FY14 city budget](#)), DDS listed, as one of their measures of efficiency, lowering the average number of days between the date a building application is filed, until the date the permit is issued. Their target level of efficiency using this metric for FY14 was **seven (7) days**. In previous years, the “lag time” has been as high as **8.83 days**, but has been expedited to a current average of **6.37 days** in in FY14. The two graphs in **Figure 2** highlight the efficiency measure (left) alongside the number of permits issued each year. It is worth noting that in FY11, the lag time was **8.31 days**, on average, with a total of **1,770 permits issued**, but decreased to a lag time of **7.21** in FY13, while the number of permits increased to a total of **1,797**. This efficiency measure suggests increased cooperation between clerical staff and inspectors and results in an easier, more efficient process for both commercial and residential developers in the city, as well as residents who perform work on their own homes.

