

## **Gardiner Corrects All Citations from Safety Inspection a Month Ahead of Deadline**

*70% of citations were corrected before the City even received a copy of the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards report*

In mid-August the City of Gardiner received a workplace safety inspection from the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards (BLS). These inspections occur at random and affect all municipalities across the state. A BLS representative spent several days inspecting seven municipal facilities, including the wastewater treatment plant, public works garage, buildings & grounds bays, fire department, police department, South Gardiner fire station, and South Gardiner pump station. City staff worked closely with the BLS representative during this time answering all questions and providing the requested documents.

On October 11, the City received the [write-ups outlining the inspection findings](#) for these seven facilities. In total, 69 citations were issued. Some facilities only had one citation while others had multiple. Some citations were for missing training documents while others were more serious. The City was given a December 15, 2016 deadline to address all items. As the BLS inspector had provided a tentative listing of deficiencies to the City at the end of her August visit, the City began working on correcting these deficiencies immediately. Of the 69 citations, 48 were corrected prior to the City even receiving the write-up from BLS (70%). The remaining 21 items were corrected on or before November 15, a full month ahead of the BLS-imposed deadline (click here for the [response letter](#) and [response certification sheets](#) sent to BLS). The City spent \$22,954 in correcting all items and submitted its response to BLS on November 15<sup>th</sup>.

For the 69 citations, BLS has fined the City \$9,000. The City has requested a “penalty discussion” with BLS, with the expectation of getting the fine reduced since we corrected over two-thirds of the items before we even received the BLS report and fixed the rest a month ahead of their deadline. The fines and number of citations for each facility are as follows:

- **Buildings & Grounds** (includes So. Gardiner Fire Station): \$700 in fines for 5 citations
- **Fire Department**: \$3,800 in fines for 21 citations
- **Police Department**: \$700 in fines for 5 citations
- **Public Works**: \$1,700 in fines for 17 citations
- **Wastewater Treatment** (includes So. Gardiner Pump Station): \$2,100 in fines for 21 citations

Over the past few years, the City has been very proactive in addressing safety issues. We requested a voluntary safety inspection from the State of Maine (SafetyWorks) and another through our workers’ compensation insurance carrier (Maine Municipal Association). The City has also allocated several thousand dollars toward addressing safety concerns in various departments over the course of the last two budget cycles. In addition, we named an employee within our Buildings & Grounds department as our Safety Coordinator. His work, in conjunction with that of our Safety Committee and department heads, has led to numerous improvements across our facilities over the past several years. We believe the BLS penalties would have been much more numerous and severe had we not been working so diligently on these matters as of late.

This City of Gardiner remains committed to providing a safe place for both our employees and the public.

For more information contact Scott Morelli, City Manager, at 582-4200 or [citymanager@gardinermaine.com](mailto:citymanager@gardinermaine.com).