

Legislative Review of Westchester County 2009 Proposed Operating Budget Department Budget Worksheet

County Department:	<u>Consumer Protection</u>	Date of Presentation:	<u>11/21/08</u>
Commissioner Name:	<u>Gary Brown</u>	Commissioner Phone:	<u>995-2162</u>
Committee with Oversight Responsibility for Dept:	<u>Legislation</u>	Committee Chair:	<u>William Burton</u>
Prepared by (Committee Coordinator): <u>Steve Bass</u>			

Budget: Proposed 2009: \$ <u>2,070,443</u>	Approved 2008: \$ <u>1,911,458</u>	%Increase/Decrease: <u>-8.3%</u>
Staffing: # employees 2008: <u>25</u>	Proposed staffing 2009: <u>24</u>	% +/- Staffing: <u>-(1)</u>
Sources of Funding: County: <u>100%</u>	State: <u>0%</u>	Federal: <u>0%</u> Grants: <u>0%</u>
Mandated portion of department budget: \$ <u>0</u>	% of total dept budget: <u>0</u>	% of county budget: <u>100%</u>

2008 DEPT. HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Did committee invite commissioner in this past year to discuss specific areas of concern? Describe.

There has been no legislation introduced in 2008 which would impact The Department of Consumer Protection. We have spoken with staff on implementing the most recent laws that were adopted.

Report on 2008: Highlight of dept's accomplishments *(Usually in executive summary of dept budget)*

Collected record-high revenue in 2007 of over \$1.75 million. Obtained over \$970,000 in restitution for consumers in 2007 which was more than 7 times greater than the department's tax levy. Obtained over \$700,000 in restitution for consumers in 2008, thru October. Because of the recent law passed in 2007 to seize the vehicles and equipment of unlicensed home improvement contractors, the department nabbed a total of 121 people during the spring and fall enforcement. There is now a record high 7,600 licensed home improvement contractors. Increased investigations of the sale of outdated food. In 2008 the number of outdated items per store dropped by 66%. Fines totaling \$85,000 were issued to the 33 stores which had 10 or more items that were at least 4 days outdated.

2009 Operating Budget

Impact of State budget cuts on dept: \$ 0

Specific cutbacks to accommodate reduced spending? Program areas most affected:

There are no cutbacks.

What's expected public impact of proposed cuts? *[EXAMPLES: Public won't notice? Closing sites in these locations? Less funding for specific programs. Consolidating program areas to economize.]*

N/A

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QUOTES/COMMENTS

Quote from Oversight Committee Chair

"I am pleased to see our new law allowing the seizing of tools and trucks from unlicensed home contractors who think they can get away with cheating Westchester homeowners has been effective."

Quote from Budget & Appropriations Chair

Other Comment(s)/Quotes, Facts

- Thru November 13th the department is running in the black.
- Collected record high revenue in 2007 of over \$1.75 million resulting in only a \$134,545 tax levy.
- Obtained over \$970,000 in restitution for consumers in 2007 and has obtained \$700,000 thru October of 2008.
- They have automated the field inspection program which is making the department more efficient.
- The new seizure and impound of equipment and vehicles of unlicensed contractors has been helpful in licensing a record number of people.
- New law dramatically increasing the penalties for repeat violators has also been an effective tool.
- Launched Senior Crime Busters with state and not-for-profit agencies.
- Successfully conducted investigation on the sale of outdated food. Outdated items dropped by 66%. \$85,000 worth of fines were issued.