



## Office of the Inspector General Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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### **Inspector General Review of Allegations About a Local Department of Public Works, June 2005**

The Office of the Inspector General received allegations that employees of a local department of public works misused and/or abused equipment, property, and supplies owned by a town. Upon receipt of the allegations, staff from this office met with the mayor and his staff to address the allegations.

The town opted to conduct an internal investigation into the allegations and this office agreed to comment on the findings. The allegations referred to the unauthorized use of public works supplies, equipment, and facilities, conducting business on town-time, use of town vehicles, borrowing town equipment, and allowing employees and residents of the town to dispose of a public asset for personal gain.

The town forwarded the results of the internal investigation to this office. The investigation found the allegations without merit or found that past practices had been corrected through improved internal controls. The office offered further recommendations on certain allegations that the office believed to have merit.

The recommendations provide an opportunity for the town to improve departmental policies and internal controls. For example, the office recommended that the department create a central inventory that would require staff to sign out materials when used and perform periodic inventory audits by municipal staff outside of the department. The office also recommended that the practice of allowing employees to borrow town-owned equipment be discontinued.

Finally, the Inspector General's office recommended that the town's procurement staff and counsel be consulted concerning the disposal of surplus supplies. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30B governs the disposal of such material and must be followed.