



## AUDIT REPORT

# Facility Condition Reviews – Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices

March 20, 2020



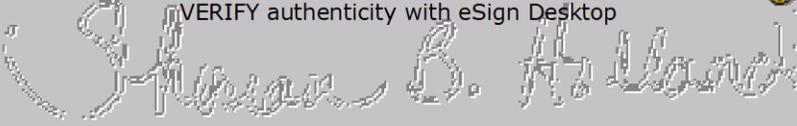
Report Number 20-160-R20



March 20, 2020

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** LEGRETTA Y. ROSS-RAWLINS  
ACTING DISTRICT MANAGER, SOUTH JERSEY  
DISTRICT

E-Signed by Holland, Shirian  
VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Shirian B. Holland". Above the signature, the text "E-Signed by Holland, Shirian" and "VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop" is displayed. A small yellow question mark icon is in the top right corner of the box.

**FROM:** Shirian B. Holland  
Acting Director, Supply Management and Facilities

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – Facility Condition Reviews –  
Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices  
(Report Number 20-160-R20)

This report presents the results of Facility Condition Reviews at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Postmaster General  
Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President  
Corporate Audit Response Management  
Vice President, Facilities  
Vice President, Eastern Area Operations

## Background

This report presents the results of our self-initiated audit of facility conditions at the Belmar (owned), Normandy Beach (leased), and Spring Lake (leased) post offices in the South Jersey District (Project Number 20-160). This audit was designed to provide U.S. Postal Service management with timely information on potential risks related to facility conditions. The Postal Service is required to maintain a safe and healthy environment for both employees and customers in accordance with its internal policies and procedures<sup>1</sup> and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)<sup>2</sup> safety laws.

## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to determine if Postal Service management is adhering to building maintenance, safety and security standards, and employee working condition requirements at post offices.

To accomplish our objective, we developed a checklist of requirements related to building maintenance and safety and security. We judgmentally selected the Normandy Beach Post Office based on its square footage, maintenance requests, and total repair/maintenance spending. We selected the Belmar and Spring Lake post offices based on their proximity to the Normandy Beach Post Office. In addition, we reviewed Postal Service systems to identify maintenance issues and analyzed documentation for deficiencies. We conducted site visits from January 14-16, 2020, and performed observations, completed the checklists, and briefed local management on the issues identified.

We relied on computer-generated data from the Safety Toolkit and electronic Facilities Management System. We assessed the reliability of the extracted data by reviewing the documentation and comparing it to our observations for completeness, validity, and accuracy. We determined that the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

We conducted this performance audit from January through March 2020 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on March 2, 2020 and included their comments where appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> Handbook MS-47, *Housekeeping Postal Facilities*, TL-5, June 27, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> OSHA Act of 1970 and Handbook EL-801, *Supervisor's Safety Handbook*.

We found that building maintenance and safety and security at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake post offices did not meet prescribed standards. We identified 27 deficiencies at the three facilities that ranged from minor to more serious violations (see [Appendix A](#)). None of the three facilities performed required semiannual housekeeping inspections or maintained PS Forms 4851, Housekeeping Inspection. In addition, we identified unlocked carrier trucks at two of the three facilities.

## Building Maintenance

At the Belmar Post Office, we identified issues related to stained ceiling tiles in the workroom area on the second floor and the women’s locker room on the third floor and a damaged urinal in the men’s restroom (see [Figures 1 and 2](#)). We also identified other general maintenance issues, such as damaged plastering and chipped paint around a window at the rear of the workroom (see [Figure 3](#)). The postmaster stated that the stained ceiling tiles and damaged plastering was caused by a previous water leak. The leak occurred on September 11, 2018 and was repaired on September 17, 2018.

**Figure 1. Stained Ceiling Tiles**



Source: U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) photograph taken January 14, 2020.

**Figure 2. Damaged Urinal**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 14, 2020.

In addition, the main entrance door to the lobby slams loudly when closed and needs to be repaired. We also observed excess equipment (tubs and trays) in the loading dock area that needed to be removed (see [Figure 4](#)).

**Figure 3. Damaged Window Plastering**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 14, 2020.

**Figure 4. Excess Equipment**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 14, 2020.

At the Spring Lake Post Office, we identified several stained and missing ceiling tiles throughout the facility. For example, there were stained ceiling tiles behind the window clerk's counter, the men's and ladies' restrooms, customer service lobby, and Post Office Box area (see Figures 5 and 6). In addition, there were missing ceiling tiles behind the window clerk's counter and in the clerk's office (see [Figures 7 and 8](#)).

**Figure 5. Stained Ceiling Tile Behind Window Clerk's Counter**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 15, 2020.

**Figure 6. Stained Ceiling Tile In Post Office Box Area**



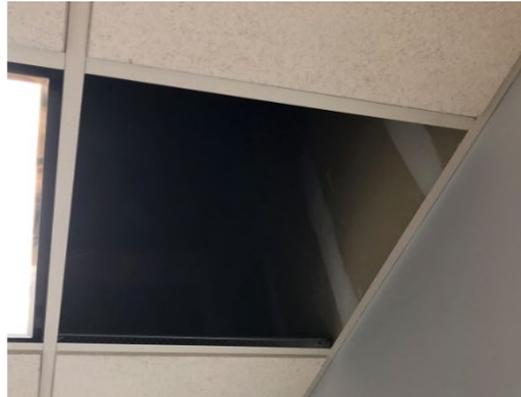
Source: OIG photograph taken January 15, 2020.

**Figure 7. Missing Ceiling Tile Behind Window Clerk’s Counter**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 15, 2020.

**Figure 8. Missing Ceiling Tile In Clerk’s Office**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 15, 2020.

## Building Safety

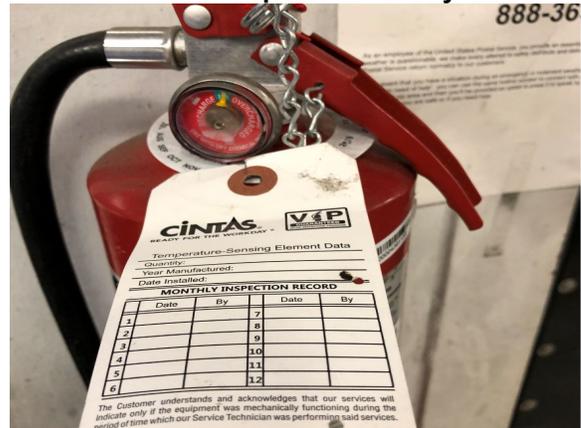
Two fire extinguishers at the Belmar Post Office were not inspected monthly or annually (see Figures 9 and 10). The last annual fire inspections were completed in March 2018 and July 2018. One of the three fire extinguishers was blocked with a box, making it difficult to access. The facility did not display the *Zero Tolerance Policy and Reporting Procedures* and CA-10, *What a Federal Employee Should Do When Injured At Work*, posters as required. We also identified three cold packs in the first-aid kit that expired in July 2013.

**Figure 9. Fire Extinguishers Not Inspected Annually**



Source: OIG photographs taken January 14, 2020.

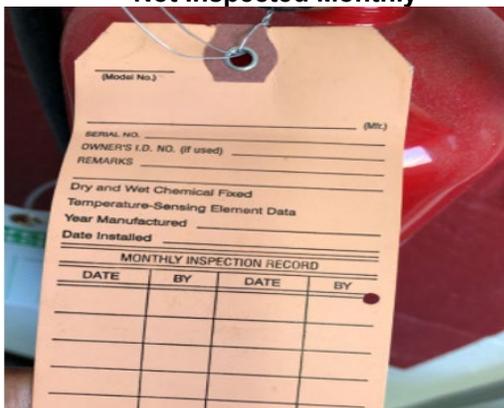
**Figure 10. Fire Extinguishers Not Inspected Monthly**



Source: OIG photographs taken January 14, 2020.

At the Normandy Beach Post Office, two fire extinguishers did not have monthly inspections completed and there was no information to show when the last inspection was performed (see [Figure 11](#)). In addition, we identified expired items in the first-aid kit, including first-aid cream, which expired October 2016; an instant cold pack, which expired July 2013; sterile pads, which expired April 2018; and eye saline solution, which expired September 2016 (see [Figure 12](#)).

**Figure 11. Fire Extinguishers  
Not Inspected Monthly**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 16, 2020.

**Figure 12. Expired Eye Saline Solution**



Source: OIG photograph taken January 16, 2020.

Other issues at the Normandy Beach Post Office included a broken lock on a door leading into the workroom area and no visible OSHA posters 3167, *Job Safety & Health Protection* (Spanish version), and CA-10 displayed.

At the Spring Lake Post Office, there were several expired items in the first-aid kit, including triple antibiotic ointment, which expired September 2019; eyewash solution, which expired November 2019; first-aid burn cream, which expired November 2019; and povidone iodine wipes, which expired March 2019. In addition, the facility did not display OSHA poster 3167.

## Building Security

At the Belmar Post Office, we identified three unlocked carrier trucks in the loading dock area of the secured Postal Service parking lot (see Figure 13).

**Figure 13. Unlocked Carrier Truck**



Source: OIG photographs taken January 14, 2020.

We did not identify any security issues at the Normandy Beach Post Office and the postmaster did not have any security concerns.

At the Spring Lake Post Office, we identified one unlocked carrier truck in the loading dock area of an unsecured parking lot (see Figure 14).

**Figure 14. Unlocked Carrier Truck**



Source: OIG photographs taken January 15, 2020.

The Postal Service is required to maintain a safe environment for both employees and customers. In addition, OSHA requires employers to provide a safe and healthful workplace free of recognized hazards. More important, these issues could jeopardize the health, safety, and well-being of Postal Service employees and customers. Further, it could create an environment that dissuades customers from doing business in these offices. If management does not address hazards, the Postal Service could potentially incur fines.

Conditions related to building maintenance, safety, and security occurred due to management not prioritizing issues and a lack of oversight. For example, some maintenance issues at the facilities were not considered priority and fire extinguisher inspections were not completed at the Belmar and Normandy Beach post offices because management overlooked the required inspection dates. At Belmar and Spring Lake post offices, management did not ensure carrier trucks were locked due to lack of oversight.

Postal Service policy requires vehicle doors to be locked, except when loading or unloading the vehicle.<sup>3</sup> OSHA requires the inspection, maintenance and testing of all portable fire extinguishers, including monthly and annual inspections.<sup>4</sup> Management is also required to conduct housekeeping inspections semiannually,<sup>5</sup> a requirement that local managers at all three post offices were unaware of.

Management's attention to maintenance, safety, and security deficiencies can reduce the risk of injuries to employees and customers; reduce related costs, such as workers' compensation claims, lawsuits, and OSHA penalties; and enhance the customer experience and Postal Service brand. We identified four issues that could potentially result in \$21,840<sup>6</sup> of risk exposure.

<sup>3</sup> Handbook M-41, *City Carriers and Responsibilities*, Sections 822 and 823, June 2019.

<sup>4</sup> OSHA, 29 CFR 1910.157 (e)(1), (e)(2), and (e)(3).

<sup>5</sup> *Custodial Team Cleaning Handbook*, Section 4.6, March 13, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Based on average fine amount the Postal Service paid for post office OSHA violations from 2017 to 2019.

## Other Matters – Corrective Action

The Belmar Postmaster took corrective action immediately after our site visit by unblocking the fire extinguisher, having the annual fire inspection completed, and displaying posters CA-10 and *Zero Tolerance Policy and Reporting Procedures* on the bulletin board.

The Normandy Beach Post Office Postmaster took corrective action while we were onsite by printing and displaying OSHA posters 3167 and CA-10.

When we were at the Spring Lake Post Office, the Officer-In-Charge downloaded OSHA poster 3167, laminated it, and posted it on the bulletin board. In addition, he provided proof of an order to replace expired first-aid kit items.

**Recommendation #1:** We recommend the **Manager, South Jersey District**, address all building maintenance, safety, and security issues identified at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices.

**Recommendation #2:** We recommend the **Manager, South Jersey District**, perform housekeeping inspections and ensure fire extinguishers are inspected monthly and annually at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices.

## Management's Comments

Management agreed with the report's findings and recommendations.

Regarding recommendation 1, management stated the postmasters confirmed abatement of all maintenance, safety, and security deficiencies listed in [Appendix A](#) by February 27, 2020, except for the damaged urinal at the Belmar Post Office, which was abated by March 6, 2020; the damaged and chipped window plastering at the Belmar Post Office, which was abated by March 10, 2020; and the stained and missing ceiling tiles at the Spring Lake Post Office, which were replaced by March 13, 2020.

Management provided photos of the Spring Lake Post Office ceiling repairs but did not include supporting documentation or photos of other corrective actions taken. The repair of ceiling tiles, damaged and chipped window plastering, and damaged walls at the Belmar Post Office; and replacement of or proof of order to replace expired first-aid kit items at Belmar and Normandy Beach.

Regarding recommendation 2, management stated housekeeping inspections were completed for the Belmar Post Office on January 26, 2020; Normandy Beach Post Office on January 17, 2020; and Spring Lake Post Office on January 22, 2020. Management provided a copy of the completed Housekeeping Inspection Form 4851 for

the Normandy Beach Post Office but did not provide supporting documentation for Belmar and Spring Lake Post Offices.

In addition, management stated monthly fire extinguisher inspections were completed at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake Post Offices in February 2020 and are ongoing, and annual inspections are planned for the Spring Lake Post Office in April 2020 and Belmar and Normandy Beach Post Offices in July 2020.

See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

## **Evaluation of Management's Comments**

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendations and corrective actions should resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 1, although management provided photos of ceiling repairs at the Spring Lake Post Office, they need to provide clear evidence or photos of other completed items, including the ceiling, window plastering, and damaged wall repairs at the Belmar Post Office; and proof of replacement or order to replace expired first-aid kit items at the Belmar and Normandy Beach Post Offices.

Regarding recommendation 2, although management provided evidence of a current housekeeping inspection at the Normandy Beach Post Office, they need to provide copies of completed housekeeping inspections for the Belmar and Spring Lake Post Offices. Management also needs to provide clear documentation or photos showing the latest completed monthly fire extinguisher inspections at the Belmar and Normandy Beach Post Offices.

All recommendations require OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendations 1 and 2 should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendation can be closed.

## Appendix A: Facility Deficiency Summary

	Facility	Belmar	Normandy Beach	Spring Lake	Total Deficiencies
<b>Building Maintenance Issues</b>					
1	Stained ceiling tiles	D	✓	D	2
2	Missing ceiling tiles	✓	✓	D	1
3	Damaged urinal in men’s restroom	D	✓	✓	1
4	Damaged and chipped window plastering	D	✓	✓	1
5	Main entrance door slams loudly and needs repair	D	✓	✓	1
6	Door to workroom area does not lock	✓	D	✓	1
7	Excess equipment in the loading dock area	D	✓	✓	1
8	Damaged walls in workroom area	D	✓	✓	1
9	Missing Housekeeping Inspection (PS Form 4851)	D	D	D	3
<b>Building Safety Issues</b>					
10	Portable fire extinguisher not inspected monthly	D	D	✓	2
11	Portable fire extinguisher not inspected annually	D	✓	✓	1
12	Blocked fire extinguisher	D	✓	✓	1
13	No CA-10, <i>What a Federal Should Do When Injured at Work</i> poster displayed	D	D	✓	2
14	No <i>Zero Tolerance Policy and Reporting Procedures</i> poster displayed	D	✓	D	2
15	No OSHA Poster 3167, <i>Job Safety and Health</i> displayed	✓	D	D	2
16	Expired first-aid kit items	D	D	D	3
<b>Building Security Issues</b>					
17	Unlocked carrier trucks	D	✓	D	2
<b>Total Deficiencies</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>

Source: OIG analysis based on facility reviews.

✓ – No deficiency; D – Deficiency

## Appendix B: Management's Comments

DISTRICT MANAGER (A)  
SOUTH JERSEY DISTRICT



March 17, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: LAZERICK C. POLAND  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

**Subject: Facility Condition Reviews  
Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ Post Offices  
(Project Number 20-160)**

I would like to express my appreciation to you and the team for providing a critical look at the subject post offices regarding maintenance, safety and security conditions. I can assure you that these offices and other facilities in this District will be performing regular checklists on the key items presented in this audit. We agree with the findings presented in your report of March 3, 2020 and the deficiencies annotated for the subject post offices in Appendix A: Facility Deficiency Summary.

**RECOMMENDATION #1:**

We recommended the Manager, South Jersey District, address all building maintenance, safety, and security issues identified at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ Post Offices.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE/ACTION PLAN:**

We agree that all building maintenance, safety and security issues be abated. We met with the leadership team and the Postmasters of these offices on February 27, 2020. During this meeting, we were given a status update on each of the deficiencies found in Appendix A.

**ACTION TAKEN:**

The Postmasters from all three offices confirmed abatement of all deficiencies found on Appendix A by February 27, 2020, except for Belmar items # 3 and #4; the damaged urinal was abated by March 6, 2020 and the damaged and chipped window plastering abated by March 10, 2020. For Spring Lake items #1 and #2, the stained and missing ceiling tiles were completed by the landlord on March 13, 2020.

**TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE:**

Completed March 13, 2020

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS:**

Postmaster

Page 2  
Facility Condition Reviews: Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ Post Offices  
(Project Number 20-160)

**RECOMMENDATION #2:**

We recommend the Manager, South Jersey District, perform housekeeping inspections and ensure fire extinguishers are inspected monthly and annually at the Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ Post Offices.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE/ACTION PLAN:**

We agree that housekeeping and fire extinguisher inspections are performed according to USPS policy. Our Safety Manager re-distributed the Facility Condition Review Checklist-Retail to all of South Jersey District's associate post offices and branches on February 28, 2020. The Postmasters of the subject post offices confirmed their current completion of the housekeeping and fire extinguisher inspections. We are requiring that all of our post offices perform both of these requirement inspections as well.

The housekeeping inspection completions are as follows:

Belmar: 1/26/20  
Normandy Beach: 1/17/20  
Spring Lake: 1/22/20

The monthly fire extinguishers inspection for Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ initiated February 2020 and is on-going. The annual fire extinguishers inspection for Belmar and Normandy Beach is due July 2020 and for Spring Lake on April 2020.

**TARGET IMPLEMENTATION DATE:**

Completed.

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS:**

Safety Manager  
District Manager

  
LE GRETTA Y. ROSS-RAWLINS

Attachments: Housekeeping Inspections-Belmar, Normandy Beach, and Spring Lake, NJ  
Ceiling Tiles-Spring Lake, NJ (7 pages)

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