

Property Inspection Program

The collection and maintenance of current and accurate property inventory data is a critical element in the development of uniform, fair market values. Accordingly, the Bureau of Local Assessment (BLA) of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) requires that communities re-inspect all town property, including tax exempt parcels, at least once every nine years. This continuous process of inspecting parcels throughout the town is known as a “cyclical re-inspection program.”

Property inspections also occur as a result of building permits, a transfer of title or an abatement request.

All property inspections are conducted by in-house staff. The inspectors drive Town of Rochester marked cars and carry photo ID's. Please note that inspectors do not revise assessed values during the inspection process. Rather, they inspect in order to collect, correct and/or update the data on individual taxpayer's assessment records. Any changes collected are then data entered into our real estate database. Finally, these changes, in conjunction with market adjustments (due to past rather than current sales activity), are used by the Assessors to set new assessment values each fiscal year.

Inspectors will initiate inspections by knocking on the door/ringing the doorbell asking permission from the owner to perform an interior and exterior inspection of the property. Property inspections involve taking exterior measurements of all structures on the property. Structures include buildings, sheds, pools, patios, etc. In addition, inspectors ask permission to walk through the interior of the main structures (homes, commercial buildings, etc.). If an owner is not present when the inspector arrives, a flyer is left inviting the owner to call to schedule an interior inspection. Please note that the inspector will measure exterior structures on the property regardless of whether or not the owner is present when the inspector arrives at a property.

In conclusion, whether prompted by cyclical re-inspection compliance, a building permit, a transfer of title or an abatement request, a program of regular inspections enables the Town of Rochester to maintain a current property database. Finally, maintaining a current property database helps assure that all taxpayers are assessed fairly and equitably.