



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR**

JILL LATHAN
DPW COMMISSIONER

ERIC WEISMAN
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Date: September 26, 2024
To: School Building Facilities and Maintenance committee
From: Commissioner Jill Lathan
RE: Items 24-1285, 24-1287, 24-1288, 24-1289, and 24-1301

Members of the School Buildings and Facilities Maintenance committee,

The following information from the Department of Public works is being provided to the members of School Building Facilities and Maintenance special committee in response to the above referenced items.

Item 24-1285 That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update on efforts to eliminate rat infiltration in school buildings.

SPS Pest Management:

- Waltham Pest performs a bi-weekly service.
- Exterior perimeter bait box check for Rodent activity. The City can no longer use lethal bait such as Rodenticide.
- During a walk around checking bait boxes they look for unusual activity, such as burrows, entry points, etc.
- Interior checks in reported or know high activity areas such as the Kitchen, Cafeteria, staff break rooms, and any other areas reported.
- The technician will add sticky and snap traps were needed.
- A technician is sent out for a priority check when requested by DPW via forwarding of a 311 request (Prioritized by Supervisor of Facilities, Building Supt. or building Supervisors).

DPW:

- We provide sticky & snap traps were needed / requested due to activity.

- We will clean and disinfect areas of reported rodent activity and investigate the area for a cause for the activity, such as an entry point and food source.
- When a 311 comes in we immediately send to Waltham Pest for action along with one of the building Supervisors investing and diagnosing the issue ASAP in order to better understand and inform Waltham Pest and their technicians.

Item 24-1287 That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update about the functionality of public address, or PA, systems at multiple Somerville Public School buildings.

- We have received several requests from the school department for repairs or enhancements to our PA systems. Two vendors are touring the schools the week of September 16th and the week of September 23rd to provide quotes for their repair.

Item 24-1288 That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update on repairs to damaged play structures at the Capuano Early Education Center schoolyard.

- Parts on order for repair.

Item 24-1289 That the Commissioner of Public Works provide an update on the reliability and repairs of the elevator(s) at the Winter Hill and Edgerly Schools.

Rich Raiche IAM Director summarized the issue.

- The outage was caused by an incorrect wiring of the new power supply installed this summer by Eversource within a panel locked by Eversource. The DPW and IAM teams coordinated throughout the day on Friday and Saturday to diagnose this root cause and worked with Eversource to correct the issue by the end of the day on Monday. Certainly, this doesn't lessen the trauma felt by the Winter Hill community, but it is important to acknowledge this failure was caused by Eversource and not indicative of any shortcomings of the City's efforts to support the Schools or indeed associated with the age of the Edgerly.
- In terms of technical details, the Edgerly has both 2-phase power that runs lights, computers, and regular appliances like you would see in a home, and 3-phase power that runs the elevator, HVAC system, and a few other industrial-grade pieces of equipment. The problem was with the wiring of one of the lugs on the 3-phase power current transformer that caused intermittent shorting out of one of the three phases. As a result of that partial and intermittent power failure, the elevator motor could not function, which was not immediately apparent to the elevator technician and required broader investigation by a larger team, and which ultimately required correction by utility company.

Item 24-1301 That the Director of Parks and Recreation and the Commissioner of Public Works update this Council on plans to minimize the timing impacts of future closures of the Ginny Smithers Sanders Pool for periodic maintenance.

- From a DPW standpoint best practice is to close the pool for at least 30 days for maintenance. This includes but not limited to; cleaning and checking drains, cleaning and checking grouts and tiles, checking latter's, checking overall pool systems, mechanics, interiors, etc. Every two years an additional deep cleaning with an acid wash. This 30 day closure is critical in preserving our pool systems and the overall efficiency of pool operations. This closure usually is mid-August to mid-September. However, the Recreation department may choose a August-September closure to align with Fall program needs. Delays in this year closure is due to a number of factors.
 1. Prior to the scheduled closure it was discovered that there compressor issues not communicated to DPW nor to 311. This meant the pool was closed prior to the scheduled DPW closure and the public was not notified.
 2. DPW immediately noticed some safety concerns with a mechanical closet. This necessitated immediate safety standards be implemented and remediate.
- DPW has now taken over all Recreation facilities to provide consistent maintenance and preventive maintenance standards.

Thank you,

Jill Lathan
DPW Commissioner