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Keeping pace with the changes in city's Local Laws

The office of Israel Berger & Associates LLC, one of New York's most respected firms in curtain-wall and building enclosures consulting, has conducted Local Law 10 and 11 inspections since the law was enacted in 1980.

At the start of the 7th cycle of the Department of Buildings-mandated inspection, IBA is seeing a renewed interest from building owners and managers as Local Law 11 inspections are being incorporated into long-term planning and budgeting of maintenance programs.

IBA has established itself as the leader among re-cladding consultants in New York, having worked on many major building re-claddings in the city, a process that is arguably the most demanding and complicated operation in building façade work.

Israel Berger AIA, the CEO of IBA, said, "Because IBA understands the dynamics of maintaining, repositioning and marketing buildings, especially in the

current economy, we are constantly being called upon to help owners develop a strategy for the maintenance and restoration of building facades, emphasizing economics and long-term planning."

In April, IBA distributed informative laminated cards to over 500 building owners and managers with a summary of the changes to the 7th Cycle of Local law 11 that were announced by the Department of Buildings earlier this year.

One of the biggest changes is that, rather than have every eligible building be inspected at the same time, the DOB has organized the dates of inspection on a staggered basis over a three year period. The filing deadlines are based on the last digit of the block identification number. For example, a building listed on the city's books as Block 809 would have to be inspected between February 21, 2010 and February 21, 2012.

Another change is that the reports now must be filed not later than 60 days after the "critical examination"

inspection, rather than within a year; that's a significant change which could prove to be costly because there will be fines imposed for missing the filing period.

On the back side of the laminated card, there is a color-coded, 4-year calendar that graphically illustrates the new filing dates.

To make the process both economical and convenient for owners, IBA has also streamlined the fees process at two levels: a single pre-set fee for the inspection and a pre-negotiated price for the scaffold services, to be provided for from a short list of restoration contractors.

Stanford Chan AIA, director of the Restoration Division at IBA, said "Our staff of trained architects and preservation professionals is able to delineate the proper and proportional response to deficiencies observed during the "critical examination" phase. This is absolutely key to keeping the scope of repair work on target. It is all about judgment." ■