

City of Seattle

Office of City Auditor

Today's Topics

1. Our mission
2. How we accomplish it
3. Our main focus areas in 2012

What we do

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS
City of Seattle Office of City Auditor
April 19, 2011

City of Seattle Anti-Litter Efforts

Why We Did This Audit
In February 2010, Seattle City Councilmembers Tom Burgess and Auditor Tom Rasmussen asked the City Auditor to assess the sufficiency of Seattle's graffiti and litter laws, with these two issues, and develop recommendations for reducing and preventing graffiti and litter. They were concerned that the presence of physical disorder such as graffiti and litter contributes to the incidence of crime. First, we completed our review of the City's anti-graffiti efforts, which was published in July 2010. We then applied what we learned from our work on the graffiti audit to this review of street/ground litter in an urban environment.

What We Learned

- In 2009, the City of Seattle (City) spent approximately \$8.2 million on programs that deal with street/ground litter.
- The City has litter programs and activities in a number of departments, including: Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Finance and Administration, Neighborhoods, and the Seattle Municipal Court. Most City litter programs operate effectively with little interdepartmental coordination required.
- The City has not established litter baseline statistics or trends to measure how City or private sector programs are performing either over time or in comparison to other jurisdictions.
- The City has laws against littering and accumulation of solid waste but they are rarely enforced.
- Except for hazardous substances or litter that is an immediate threat to the health or safety of the public, City law is silent on responsibility for the removal of solid waste in amounts equal to or less than one cubic foot by property owners on their properties and adjacent lots of use.

Annual Report

City of Seattle Office of City Auditor

"I am very pleased with your assessment of other strategies that cities have tried ... and your conclusions that many of those efforts ... don't have an impact on this problem - which is why we as a Council need to consistently insist on evidence-based best practices that actually show that they work - not only in this area but also in other areas of the City where we spend the taxpayers' money".

Seattle City Councilmember Tim Burgess
Referring to the Graffiti Audit, August 2010

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Promising Practices in Risk Management

Why We Did This Audit
Seattle City Councilmembers Jean Godden and Bruce Harrell asked the City Auditor to review risk management best practices implemented by public entities within Washington State and around the country. Specifically, they asked us about:

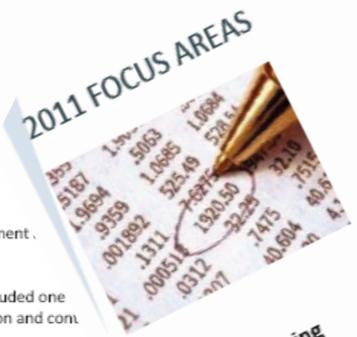
1. Organizational and legal approaches to implementing risk management strategies;
2. Methods for identifying and implementing loss control initiatives; and
3. Options for allocating and funding judgment and claims costs.

What We Learned

- In 2010, the City of Seattle (City) spent \$11.8 million from the Judgment Subfund to settle claims and lawsuits against the City.
- Traditionally, risk management functions in public entities have included one of the following: risk financing, claims administration, loss prevention and contract insurance procurement, indemnification, and contract review.
- More recently, many private and public sector entities have embraced *enterprise risk management*, a comprehensive approach to risk management that identifies and analyzes all the major barriers that could affect an entity's ability to achieve its goals and objectives.
- The jurisdictions we surveyed varied in their organizational and legal structures and no one structure stood out as a risk management best practice.
- We identified five promising practices that are parts of robust risk management programs:
 - o Strong leadership and involvement of employees at all levels of the organization;
 - o A process for identifying and prioritizing risks and determining the root causes of losses;
 - o A method for developing and implementing realistic and achievable mitigation strategies;

What We Did

- Researched industry standards and practices by conducting



Apply data mining techniques to some of our projects.

Continue reviewing major City revenue sources and expenses.

Complete an assessment of Seattle City Light to identify the best areas for potential

Audit Output
In 2010, we completed a total of twelve written products. These included six audits and six special projects that the City Council requested or the City Auditor initiated. We also participated in several efforts that did not result in written products:

- We served as program evaluation



Primary Client



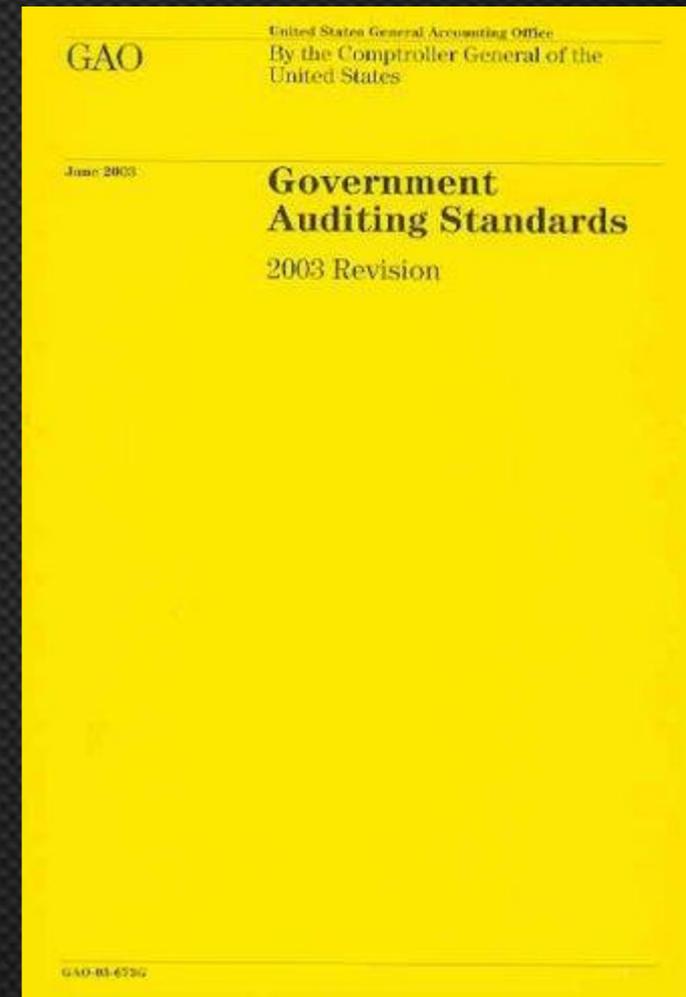




Under-Appreciated



Aligned with Standards



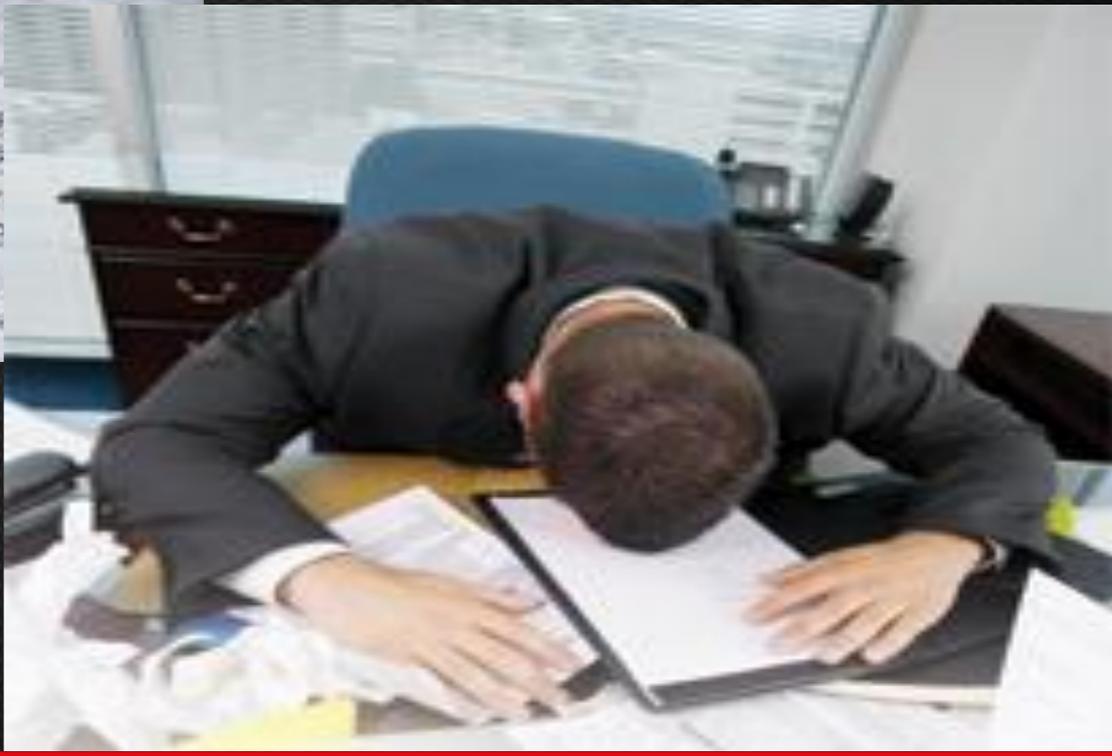


APPROVED



Layers and Layers





Root Causes





Takes Awhile

What's Sprouting in 2012?



A photograph of two people working in a garden. They are kneeling on the ground, tending to rows of young green plants. The garden is filled with various green plants and vegetables. In the background, there are blue barrels and a fence. The text "Continue Work in Public Safety, Utilities, and Technology" is overlaid in large white letters.

Continue Work in Public Safety, Utilities, and Technology

A woman with glasses and a dark sweater is in a kitchen, holding a large white bowl filled with green salad. She is using wooden chopsticks to mix the salad. The background shows a kitchen counter with various items, including a cutting board and a container. The text "Careful Examination" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Careful Examination



Dig into Program Evaluation



New Tools

New Oversight





Auditing



**Healthy
Vibrant
City**