



Homeowner Preparation for Earthquakes November 2015

In this month's bulletin, the Emergency Management Department (EMD) highlights structural safety for houses.



Examine your home:

- Is your home properly bolted to the foundation?
 - Crawl underneath your house with a flashlight.
 - The wood that rests directly on the foundation (called the mud sill) SHOULD be bolted to the foundation. Homes built before 1940 are often left unbolted to their foundations.
- Does your cripple wall need plywood?
 - If your cripple walls are covered with only stucco or wood siding, they need additional re-enforcement.
- Are there faulty materials in the wood and concrete framing?
 - Check for insect damage and dry rot.
 - Unreinforced brick or stone masonry may need to be replaced, requiring an engineer or architect.

If my home needs strengthening, what steps can I take?

- There are Standard Plans available that will greatly reduce the time required for plan check and therefore permits can be issued much faster. A list of Standard Plans can be found here <http://netinfo.ladbs.org/stdplan2.nsf/>
- The Anchor Bolting/Bracing Foundation Drawing Standard Plan can be found here http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/LADBS_Forms/Publications/anchor_bolting.pdf

How do I find an engineer, architect or contractor?

- Engineers: Call the Structural Engineers Association of Southern California at (562) 908-6131.
- Architects: Call the American Institute of Architects at (310) 785-1809.
- Contractors:
 - You should visit the Department of Consumer Affairs Contractors State License Board's website http://www.cslb.ca.gov/Consumers/Hire_A_Contractor/
 - You can verify a contractor's information, including complaint disclosure by going to <https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicenseII/CheckLicense.aspx>

Earthquake Insurance

Earthquake insurance in California is typically **not** part of your homeowner's insurance policy. You may purchase a California Earthquake Authority (CEA) policy only through CEA's participating insurers. A complete list is on the CEA web site:

<http://www.earthquakeauthority.com/insurancepolicies/Pages/participatinginsurers.aspx>

Additional information:

- City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety Offices at (213) 580-1133 to locate an office near you. Visit their website at <http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/public-home.jsf> for more resources.
- Structural Engineers Association for updates and industry news on structural safety <http://www.seaosc.org/>.
- California Architects Board provides consumer information on hiring an architect http://www.cab.ca.gov/pdf/publications/consumers_guide.pdf.

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