

BUILDING EXPERT SAYS EARTHQUAKE RETROFITTING A MUST FOR PRE-1970s STRUCTURES



A strong earthquake has the potential to knock even the sturdiest building off its foundation. But many structures generally built before 1973 are the most precarious if the “big one” should occur, according to

Jon Traw, a Southern California-based consulting licensed civil engineer. Up until the building codes were updated as a result of the lessons learned in the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, Traw said most buildings had inadequate wall anchorage between the wood frame floors or roofs and the concrete or masonry walls, making them more susceptible to severe damage.

“Buildings with tilt-up concrete walls are particularly precarious,” said Traw. “The connection between the plywood roof system and the walls are not sufficient to transfer the earthquake forces resulting in the walls often pulling away from the roof. This has been one of the most significant issues building owners have faced in buildings of this type of construction.”

To ensure the safety of all buildings that may be even in the slightest jeopardy, California provides a Commercial Property Owner’s Guide to Earthquake Safety. The guide states that seismic retrofitting is necessary to ensure a building’s safety.

Seismic retrofitting gives existing structures more resistance to quakes, according to Traw. The process includes strengthening weak connections found in roof-to-wall connections. It is done by adding a direct anchorage of the roof to the wall.

Besides concrete tilt-ups, Traw says other types of structures may benefit from a seismic retrofit. These include multi-story concrete buildings with insufficient lateral reinforcing

steel and apartment buildings with open sided parking on the first story, often referred to as soft-story construction.

“Buildings with tilt-up concrete walls are particularly precarious”

Multi-level structures can potentially be at risk because of height above the ground and the difference between the motion of the

ground and the building thus amplifying the forces the construction system must resist. The soft-story apartment buildings often have issues with failure and potential collapse of the open side. These buildings are strengthened by adding a steel moment frame or shear walls to keep the first floor from rotating and collapsing.

With the exception of unreinforced masonry buildings, Traw says there are no particular laws in place that require building owners with potentially compromised structures to be retrofitted. However, he strongly urges all property owners to have their buildings inspected if they suspect there might be an issue.

“I would advise property owners, especially those who own buildings or are considering buying a building constructed before the building codes were updated to contact a licensed civil or structural engineer to evaluate their building,” said

Traw. “They will write up an engineering report evaluating the potential risk to earthquake damage and if need be, will refer you to a company that can do the retrofitting.”

“Also, don’t hesitate to research your property at the city or county building departments. They’ll potentially have a file that will give you the history and all the details of your building. That can be extremely helpful in determining whether there are any problems with the structure as well as securing the date when the building was constructed.”



Congratulations to the city of Whittier!

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in Los Angeles County in the category of cities with a population of 60,000 and over.





RED-TAGGED BUILDINGS WARN THE PUBLIC OF SERIOUS SAFETY HAZARDS

The last thing any property owner wants is a red tag placed on their building. The tag sends a loud and clear signal the structure poses some type of threat and should be avoided at all costs.

According to Aldo Schindler, Whittier's director of community development, red-tagged buildings are rare in his city. Still, Schindler believes it's important for property owners to understand why one might be placed on their structure.

"Vacant buildings are red-tagged the most," said Schindler. "Usually it is not very secure and squatters will go in and start to destroy it. Our main concern is that no one gets hurt on the property."

According to Michelle Harrington, a Whittier building inspector, another common reason for a building to be tagged is that it has been damaged in a natural disaster, such as an earthquake, flood or mudslide. When one of these incidents occurs, a building safety code officer is sent out to do an inspection and determine if a tag is necessary.

"Our inspectors take photos and do a thorough inspection," said Harrington. "If we find the structure is unsafe, we will ask the property owner to board it up until it's brought up to code."

Schindler wants the public to know that city officials are not out looking for properties to tag. He says typically a building with issues is brought to their attention by someone in the community who noticed there was a problem.

"We don't have time to go hunting down unsafe buildings, Schindler said. "But we will send an inspector out if we get a call about a property that may be unsafe. Our job is to make sure both the public and the property owners are safe."



In addition to red tags, properties also can be tagged with

green or yellow stickers. Green means the structure has sustained moderate damage and can only be inhabited during certain hours. Yellow signals minimal damage.

"Regardless of the condition a building is in, we will work closely with property owners to fix the problems," said Harrington. "Although that individual may be out of the area or strapped for cash, we will work with them for as long as it takes."



ONLINE PROPERTY AUCTIONS BECOMING AS POPULAR AS EBAY

If you're in the market for just about any item other than a house or commercial building, eBay is definitely the "go to" place. But there are plenty of sites online where you can bid on commercial property similar to the way you do on eBay. One is www.auction.com, which was founded in 1990 and has distinguished itself as the world leader in online real estate sales.

According to its website, Auction.com recently opened its online commercial real estate auctions to brokers and property owners looking to sell their properties to eager buyers. A typical commercial auction on Auction.com attracts more than 50,000 unique visitors, and more than 600 registered bidders.

Auction.com says its main benefit is allowing sellers to offer listings to a global market of bidders and quickly sell REO and Notes to motivated buyers. Buyers benefit from a transparent bidding process, large selection, due diligence documentation

that is viewable online in the company's secure data vault and auction prices.



The process for bidding begins with registering for an account and selecting the properties you wish to bid on. Once your properties are selected, the site will automatically total the amount required for a deposit, as well as the total proof of funds you are required to show.

Next, Auction.com asks bidders to begin arranging their financing through their own lender or direct, third-party lending sources. The company also requires investors to do their due diligence by researching the title of the property, as well as any recent inspection reports.

After a financing source is established and due diligence has been completed, buyers must make a Bidder Deposit for all the properties they intend to bid on. Minimum deposits are based on the amount of each property and are subject to change. The winning bidder's deposit will be applied toward the earnest money deposit. All

non-winners' deposits will be refunded at the auction's conclusion.

Investors also will be asked to fill out a Bidder Qualification Form and provide a recent bank statement (less than 60 days old) to prove they have the funds available. Proof of Funds will be set at a minimum of the starting bid and are required for each asset, according to Auction.com's website.

Once all of the above is in place, investors may begin bidding. The length of each auction is determined by how many properties are for auction that day. For estimated times on any given day, one can refer to Auction.com's line listing.

At the conclusion of the auction, the company contacts the winning bidder by email to go over the details of the sale, as well as all the documentation involved in the purchase. All sales are final and there is no "cooling off" period. Properties are sold "as is."

Closings are projected to occur within 30 days of each auction.



Tenant Spotlight

SANTA FE RUBBER SURVIVES, AND THRIVES, IN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN



As Whittier-based Santa Fe Rubber Products, Inc. approaches 50 years in business, owner and CEO William Krames says he is feeling a deep sense of gratitude for having survived. According to Krames, the last decade was full of challenges.

With rubber companies setting up shop in places like China and India and undercutting his prices, Krames says it has been tougher to stay afloat than he ever imagined it would be.

By thinking outside of the box and drastically cutting costs, Santa Fe Rubber has managed to not only survive, but thrive. Along with expanding the company's full-service laboratory capabilities, Krames also added a liquid silicon injection molding machine, which allows him to mold very intricate designs that cater to niche markets in the medical field.

"We have re-oriented ourselves and have been very successful at getting new business," said Krames, who founded

Santa Fe Rubber Products, Inc. in 1966. "And with the U.S. working to become self-sustaining with our oil supply, the drilling and recovery industry has really helped to sustain us through this economic downturn."

Along with the oil industry, Krames says Santa Fe Rubber services construction, medical, electronics and consumer products companies. Among its clients are TRW, Honeywell, Eaton, Weatherford and Oilwell Hydraulics, to name a few.

"Many parts made by Santa Fe Rubber are 100 percent rubber, while others are bonded to various substrates such as steel or brass," Krames said. The company also has an extensive formulary of rubber compounds and can make custom compounds, too.

"We've always had a good reputation for competitive prices and a wide variety of applications," Krames said.

Santa Fe Rubber is located in a 33,000-square-foot building. It houses 50 compression presses, as well as the liquid silicon injection molding press. The company employs approximately 50 people, according to Krames.

In the future, Krames is looking forward to continuing to add new business and create many new jobs. He says he is optimistic that the economy is going to improve and he has every intention of playing a role in the country's recovery.

"I love the challenge of being a business owner and creating opportunities for people," said Krames, who frequently speaks to graduate students at Pepperdine University. "There's been a certain psychology of failure for a while now and we have

to reverse that. Having confidence in ourselves and each other will go a long way towards turning things around. I'm very encouraged."

"We've always had a good reputation for competitive prices"

Over 400,000 square feet of NEW management accounts within the last Quarter!!

Site	Square feet	#Units	Type	City
Sluson Business Center	112,026	66	Multi Tenant Industrial	Whittier
Cerritos Business Center	59,760	28	Multi-Tenant Industrial	Cerritos
Wineville/Airport Center	53,937	43	Multi-Tenant Industrial	Ontario
Knollwood Ave.	22,860	1	Single-Tenant Industrial	Anaheim
Roland Business Center	41,800	29	Multi-Tenant Industrial	Buena Park
Yale St.	11,616	2	Multi-Tenant Industrial	Santa Ana
Borate St.	17,995	1	Single Tenant Industrial	Santa Fe Springs
Los Nietos Business Center	49,537	23	Multi-Tenant Industrial	Santa Fe Springs
Ocean View Retail	5,267	1	Single-Tenant Retail	Whittier
Spring St.	20,000	1	Single-Tenant Industrial	Santa Fe Springs
Loma Ave.	22,000	2	Single-Tenant Industrial	South El Monte
Washington Blvd.	6,480	1	Single-Tenant Industrial	Commerce
Imperial Highway	23,000	16	Multi-Tenant Retail	La Habra



Jason Jamison, SIOR



Marcy Monaco, CPM



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Size: 38,801 sf

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Los Nietos Business Park
Santa Fe Springs, CA

Size: 1,780 - 2,330 sf

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