

Renter and Mobile Home Earthquake Preparation December 2015



In this month's bulletin, the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department will cover earthquake preparation for renters and reinforcement of mobile homes.

Renters

Before renting, check for these dangers:

- Structures made of unreinforced brick or block walls which can collapse and cause great loss of life.
- "Tuck under" parking spaces (a bottom floor without walls giving the building the appearance of being on stilts over a parking lot) which can be dangerous if not retrofitted properly.
- Foundation and cripple wall failures which can cause expensive damage. Images and explanations of foundational issues and cripple walls can be found at <http://www.cert-la.com/BAS-How-You-Can-Strengthen-Your-Home.pdf>
- Objects attached to the sides of buildings, such as staircases, balconies, and decorations, which can break off in earthquakes.
- If the building has any major structural issues, consider renting elsewhere.

Ask your landlord these questions:

- Can I secure furniture to the walls?
- What retrofitting has been done on the building?
- Have the water heaters been strapped with California approved systems to the wall studs?

Mobile Home Residents

Mobile homes need "engineered tie-down systems" or "earthquake-resistant bracing systems" (ERBS):

- As a metal bracing device, an ERBS may have a vertical pole in the center supported by 4 or 6 diagonal poles that start away from the base and come together at the top like a pyramid. Look for the ERBS beneath your home.
- An ERBS should have a label on the bracing that states, "Complies with the California Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapter 2, Article 7.5."
- A metal or wood "skirt" on the outside with concrete blocks or steel tripods or jacks supporting your home is NOT enough.

Insurance Policies

- Earthquake insurance policies are available to renters, mobile home residents and condominium residents.
- Renters may want insurance to insure personal property, or cover emergency repairs.
- Keep copies of your earthquake insurance policies in a lockable, durable box to grab in an emergency.

Additional Resources:

- <http://www.californiarocks.com/renters-policies>
- <http://www.earthquakecountry.org/step4/mobilehomes.html>
- <http://www.sba.com/>
- Contact the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety by calling 3-1-1 or visiting their site <http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/public-home.jsf> for the location nearest you.

"As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities."