

BUILDING PERFORMANCE

Information sheet: Identifying potentially earthquake-prone buildings

Territorial authorities (TAs, eg local councils) are responsible for identifying potentially earthquake-prone buildings in their districts and advising owners what to do next.

The process looks like this:

What	How	Documents and tools
TAs identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings in their district (and any priority buildings in high or medium seismic risk areas)	TAs must identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings using the EPB methodology: by profile categories over the time frame allowed for your seismic risk area. TAs may identify buildings as potentially earthquake prone at any time if they have reason to suspect a building may be earthquake prone.	Building Act – requirements, seismic risk areas, time frames EPB methodology – profile categories and other criteria
TAs advise owners if their building is potentially earthquake prone	TAs must write to these owners requesting an engineering assessment.	Building Act – required actions
TAs update MBIE on progress	TAs must report regularly to MBIE on their progress identifying potentially earthquake-prone buildings.	Building Act – required actions and reporting deadlines

If you are a TA:

- Consider which seismic risk areas apply to your district and the relevant time frames for action. Think about how to prioritise your tasks so they are staggered over these time frames (eg by CBD, suburban areas, industrial areas).
- If your district includes high or medium seismic risk areas, you must identify ‘priority buildings’ in half the time allowed for other buildings. You may also need to carry out the special consultative procedure to identify priority buildings so it’s a good idea to do this early on.
- Consider the work you have done to date and whether any information you have is relevant (eg an overall programme of assessment, or previous assessments of individual buildings – the EPB methodology has the criteria for accepting these). If you have already carried out a programme of assessment (ie before the July 2017 changes to the system), check whether this aligns with the EPB methodology.
- Generally, any earthquake-prone building notices (‘section 124 notices’) issued under the previous system will need to be reissued as EPB notices. Before reissuing EPB notices, check the buildings are still in scope and advise the owner if not. Also consider whether any of these buildings are priority buildings, as this may affect the time frame for remediation

(refer schedule 1AA of the Building Act). Further information about transitioning into the new system is available in the 'Decide' fact sheet.

- Identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings using the EPB methodology: by profile categories over the time frame allowed for your seismic risk area. You may identify potentially earthquake prone buildings (whether or not by reference to the EPB methodology) at any time if you have a reason to suspect the building or part is earthquake prone.
- Use existing building information on file to help with this. You may be able to rule out buildings with existing engineering assessments, if those assessments meet the requirements in the EPB methodology, and the building has a rating of 34% or more.
- If you identify a building as potentially earthquake prone, write to the building owner requesting an engineering assessment. This request should include the basis upon which the building was identified as potentially earthquake prone (ie a profile category in the EPB methodology or another reason to suspect) and whether it is a priority building.
- Report regularly to MBIE on your progress of identifying potentially earthquake prone buildings: annually if you are in a high seismic risk area, every two years for medium, and every three years for low.

If you are an owner:

- Your TA will write to you if they identify your building as potentially earthquake prone and will request you provide an engineering assessment.
- If you already have an earthquake-prone building notice (a 'section 124 notice') issued before 1 July 2017 and your building is still within the scope of the Building Act, your TA will issue a new EPB notice and inform you if any of your obligations have changed.

If you are an engineer:

- Make sure you are familiar with the changes to the earthquake-prone building provisions, your role in the system, and the requirements set by new tools, including the EPB methodology and the Engineering Assessment Guidelines.

Find out more:

www.building.govt.nz - go to 'Managing earthquake-prone buildings' for an overview of the new system and links to the EPB methodology, and the EPB register.

For full details on roles and obligations in the new system, refer to www.legislation.govt.nz for the Building Act 2004, the Building (Specified Systems, Change the Use, and Earthquake-prone Buildings) Regulations 2005, and the Building (Infringement Offences, Fees, and Forms) Amendment Regulations 2007, as updated by the Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2016 from 1 July 2017.

This information sheet is one of a series:

Identify	TAs identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings
Assess	Owners obtain engineering assessments of these buildings
Decide	TAs determine whether buildings are earthquake prone and assign ratings
Manage	Owners strengthen or demolish buildings within set time frames

