

BUILDING PERFORMANCE

Information sheet: Managing earthquake-prone buildings

If a territorial authority (TA, eg a local council) has issued an EPB notice, owners of buildings must strengthen or demolish their building by the deadline in the EPB notice. Time frames for remediation will depend on the seismic risk area their building is located in and whether or not it is a priority building.

The process looks like this:

How	What	Documents and tools
Owners must strengthen or demolish earthquake-prone buildings	Owners must carry out seismic work within the time frame on their EPB notice.	Building Act – required actions, time frames
Owners of certain buildings can ask TAs for exemptions or an extension of time	Owners of buildings with certain characteristics can ask TAs to exempt them from carrying out the required seismic work. Owners of certain heritage buildings can ask for more time to complete the seismic work (up to ten years).	Building Act – required actions, relevant heritage buildings Regulations – required building characteristics for exemptions
Owners planning substantial alterations must do the necessary seismic work at the same time	Owners wanting to carry out ‘substantial alterations’ to earthquake-prone buildings must do the necessary seismic work at the same time. TAs determine when proposed alterations are substantial alterations.	Building Act Regulations – criteria for substantial alterations
TAs monitor and enforce	TAs’ responsibilities include checking that owners meet the required deadlines, display EPB notices appropriately and comply with any conditions.	Building Act Regulations – offences and fees

If you are a TA:

- Consider owners’ requests for more time to complete seismic work: they are eligible if their building is a Category 1 historic place on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero, or is included on the National Historic Landmarks List/Ngā Manawhenua o Aotearoa me ōna Kōrero Tūturu. Update the EPB notice and the EPB register with the new time frame. You can impose conditions on the extension for managing or reducing risks associated with the building or part being earthquake prone.
- Consider owners’ requests for an exemption from the requirement to carry out seismic work. The regulations set out the required building characteristics before you can grant

these (eg if the building is rarely occupied and when it is, only ever by a low number of people). If you grant an exemption, issue an exemption notice and update the EPB register.

- If you receive a building consent application for alterations to an earthquake-prone building, decide whether it is a substantial alteration. If it is, the consent cannot be granted unless seismic work is done at the same time.
- If you are satisfied that the building or part is no longer earthquake prone, you must remove the EPB notice and update the EPB register.
- Monitor earthquake-prone buildings in your district to check that EPB notices are correctly displayed and any conditions are complied with, and buildings with exemptions still meet the criteria and that deadlines for seismic work are met.

If you are an owner:

- If you receive an EPB notice stating your building or a part of it is earthquake prone, make sure the notice is displayed prominently on the building, and complete the necessary seismic work within the time frame stated on the EPB notice.
- You may need to work with other owners where the building shares an interconnected structure with an adjacent building/title (affected titles will be stated on the EPB notice).
- Owners of certain heritage buildings may apply for an extension of time to undertake seismic work.
- Owners of certain buildings may apply to the TA for an exemption from the requirement to carry out seismic work – check the regulations and with your TA.
- If you plan ‘substantial alterations’ to your building, and your building been determined to be earthquake prone, you may have to do the required seismic work at the same time – check the regulations and with your TA.

If you are an engineer:

- Owners will require your advice about earthquake strengthening.
- Keep good records, as TAs will need evidence that the building is no longer earthquake prone.

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) 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

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