



Seismic Upgrade for URM Buildings

Policy and Procedure

[January] 2020

POLICY FOR SEISMIC UPGRADE OF UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDINGS

A seismic upgrade to an existing un-reinforced masonry (URM) building will be required when one of the following conditions exists:

1. The URM building is in obvious structural failure. Structural deficiencies such as listing walls, large cracks or roof and floor deflection would be examples of this condition. Seismic upgrade of unsafe parapets may be required separately if there are no other problems related to the structure or not covered in items 2 and 3 below.
2. A change of occupancy to a more restrictive use. A change to an A occupancy (assembly) or an H occupancy (hazardous) from an office or warehouse are examples. The 2019 California Existing Building Code, Section 506 shall be used as a guideline.
3. Remodeling or rehabilitation that involves structurally altering an existing URM building. Enlarging openings in existing bearing walls, floors, or roofs are examples.

The seismic upgrade shall be designed by a licensed architect or registered engineer using the 2019 California Existing Building Code and 2019 California Building Code as a minimum standard.