



January 8, 2003

«CONTACT»
«TITLE»
«District_N»
«ADDRESS»
«CITY», «STATE» «ZIP»

Subject: AB 300 Seismic Safety Inventory of California Public Schools
Information for School Districts

Dear «CONTACT»:

In 1999, the California Legislature passed AB 300 (Corbett, Chapter 622), which required the Department of General Services (DGS) to conduct an inventory of Kindergarten – 12th grade public school buildings that featured concrete tilt-up construction and non-wood frame walls that do not meet the minimum requirements of the 1976 Uniform Building Code. AB 300 also required DGS to submit a report to the Legislature and the Governor summarizing the seismic risk and make recommendations to address seismic safety of public school buildings. A copy of the report is available on the DGS website under Publications - 2002 Legislative Reports at www.legi.dgs.ca.gov.

The report found that of the 60,000 public school buildings in use in California today, 7,537 school buildings -- 14% of K-12 school buildings -- do not meet certain structural criteria and should undergo additional evaluation. This evaluation should be completed by structural engineers familiar with seismic retrofits to determine if the structures should be seismically retrofitted.

The inventory identified an additional 2,122 buildings -- 6% of all K-12 school buildings -- which the report indicated were likely to perform well and were expected to achieve life-safety performance in future earthquakes.

Inclusion of a school building in the inventory is NOT, by itself, a determination of the safety of the building. The life-safety performance of any individual building depends on a number of factors, including the location relative to an earthquake fault, previous history of the earthquake performance of a building type, the duration and severity of an earthquake, safety factors that are built into the design that exceed code requirements, and other factors. **School districts should be advised that only a detailed evaluation by structural engineers can determine whether a building is expected to be safe during an earthquake or if a retrofit is needed.**

DGS is committed to assisting your district in identifying buildings and evaluating them. While the report does not list specific buildings, collected information is available from the survey database. Upon your request, the Division of the State Architect (DSA) will provide a list of all buildings surveyed within your district that fall into either of the above categories.

This list will identify the building by DSA application number, year of submittal, and type of building. Plans and records of specific projects will be available upon request. These plans and records will be very useful during the structural engineers' evaluations. However, fees will be charged to recover costs associated with retrieval and duplication of the documents. Requests should be made to the regional manager of the office in your area.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in the inventory is as accurate as possible. However, the accuracy of the data contained in the inventory is limited by the following:

1. The inventory may contain a number of buildings that may have been demolished, retrofitted, or sold; and
2. The inventory may have omitted a number of non-wood frame buildings that were constructed between 1933 and 1978.

The report constitutes a first step to recognizing the need for strengthening buildings that were constructed to standards that, over time, have become obsolete due to knowledge learned from past earthquakes. DSA looks forward to partnering with your district to strengthen these buildings to achieve the life-safety and damage control objectives of the Field Act.

If you have any questions regarding the findings of this report, please call the Regional Manager of your local DSA office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephan Castellanos', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephan Castellanos FAIA, State Architect
Division of the State Architect