Reoccupying the Building — The Role of the Local Code Official

JONATHAN SIU, PE, SE



CITY OF SEATTLE, DEPT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT



PRESIDENT, WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF BUILDING OFFICIALS

What's our role, post-EQ?

- Evaluate and post buildings for safety (ATC-20)
 - Includes changing postings
- Permits for repairs, reconstruction

What is ATC-20?

Method to determine if building can be occupied safely

Results in red/yellow/green placards

Notes:

- Focus: overall building, not individual tenant spaces
- Building owner's responsibility to respond

No entry allowed

- Mitigation of immediate hazard (e.g., hazardous chemicals)
- Construction personnel for immediate repairs, temporary support









Some limitation on use/occupancy

- Area
- Time

Wide range of damage

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Green Tag – No Apparent Hazard

Unlimited occupancy allowed

Damage does not appear to pose safety risk

Minor clean up or repair may be required



Green Tag – No Apparent Hazard



When can I expect the code official to show up?

It depends...

When can I expect the code official to show up?

Size of jurisdiction

• DPD unlikely to canvass large areas of city

Size of event

Location, type of building • Unreinforced masonry

Long list of priorities

 Critical buildings (City operations centers, hospitals, police/fire stations, shelters, schools....)

What if I don't want to wait for the code official?

- Options available for code official to adopt:
 - Building Owners Reoccupancy Program (BORP)
 - City of San Francisco
 - Advisory tag system
 - City of Seattle

BORP

Developed in San Francisco

Formal system of "deputizing" *individual engineers* (not engineering firms) to evaluate buildings after an EQ

Building owners must submit names of engineers to building department each year

Advisory Tag System

Developed by City of Seattle, refined and described in WABO/SEAW White Paper 5-2009 • <u>http://www.wabo.org/assets/SEAWPapers/wabo</u> -seaw%20wp-5%20final%20.pdf

Honor system

Allows hiring of engineering firm

No pre-earthquake involvement of local building department

Does not result in "official" placard => requires follow up by building department

WABO/SEAW WHITE PAPER 5-2009





1. Contract (Owner/Professional)
/agreement (Owner/Jurisdiction)

2. Event





4. Professional Posts Advisory Tag

5. Professional Notifies Jurisdiction

6. Jurisdiction Posts Official Placard

Follow restrictions on tag

E.g., 15 people/15 minutes to recover valuables

Determine what needs to be done to downgrade tag

- May not need more than clean up or removal of hazard
- May need to consult with engineer and contractor

If temporarily shoring/cribbing building will prevent further damage, OK to install then apply for permit (Seattle)



Contact building department to downgrade tag. May require:

- Hazard removal/mitigation
 - Watch out on historic buildings
- Stamped letter from engineer
- Temporary stabilization permit
 - Unlikely to result in downgrade to green
- Permit for repair/hazard mitigation

If permit is required, consult with local code official for repair requirements

In Seattle:

- Minor damage
 - New elements => new code
 - Brace unsafe appendages (e.g., brick parapets and chimneys)
 - Otherwise, return to pre-EQ condition
- Increased levels of damage => increased requirements for strengthening building

What can I do now to prepare?

Everyone:

- Have a home emergency plan
- Make plans assuming building can't be occupied for lengthy period of time
- Begin the conversation
 - Work together to develop a mutual mitigation and recovery plan
 - Include discussion of seismic retrofit for older buildings

What can I do now to prepare?

Owners

- Encourage tenants to have adequate insurance (incl. business interruption)
- Talk to local code official
 - http://www.wabo.org/find-your-bo
- Talk to/engage an engineering firm to evaluate building after EQ (BORP or Advisory Tag)

What can I do now to prepare?

Business Owners/Tenants:

- Insurance
- Work with other tenants to develop plans for mutual support

Questions??