

# Protect Your Home from Earthquake Damage



*Most earthquake damage to single family homes is caused either by the home jumping from its foundation or the lateral failure of a weak pony wall. DPD's home retrofit plansets address these issues.*

## **Prescriptive Plans Updated**

In 2002 the prescriptive plansets were updated. Primary changes include:

- A new table with revisions to reduce bracing requirements
- New details to address cantilevering
- Questions for determining eligibility are now included on both the prescriptive plans and in Chapter 2 of the retrofit series ("How to Complete the Home Assessment Checklist").

## **DPD: Working with Regional Partners**

Since Seattle's home retrofitting program began in October 1998, hundreds of voluntary retrofit permits have been issued. The program is now regional, with partners throughout the central Puget Sound area. The differences between Seattle and its regional partners are that:

- Permit fees vary between the participating jurisdictions.

## **Retrofit Your Home with Predesigned Plansets... the Easiest Way to Get the Permits You Need**

Since 2002 a greater number of homeowners have been able to take advantage of predesigned solutions for bracing (aka retrofitting) their homes against earthquake damage by using "prescriptive plansets." These plans help homeowners with qualifying structures obtain the necessary building permit(s) more quickly and easily and eliminate the need to hire a design professional to develop drawings.

## **Determining if Your House Qualifies**

The prescriptive plansets are designed for homes which meet certain structural criteria which are set out in the home assessment checklists and guide found in Chapter 2 of the Home Retrofit Series. The checklist included in the plansets must be completed and submitted to DPD. The guide explains the various components of the checklist. In general, the homes must be of light wood-frame construction and light roof construction, not irregularly shaped, with a concrete foundation or reinforced masonry in good condition up to three stories in height (depending on the height of the support wall below your first floor), and a relatively level lot.

## **How to Use the Prescriptive Planset**

After completing the home assessment checklist, and determining that your house qualifies for this program, you must complete the planset. Sheet S4 provides a grid to create a scaled outline of your house foundation. Once you have completed this outline, you must select retrofit solutions from Sheet SB-520. The solutions vary depending on the specific construction of your home. For details on completing the plansets see Chapter 3 of the retrofit series.

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# Other Important Resources for Retrofitting Your Home

## Homeowner Classes for Assessing and Retrofitting

*(whether doing the retrofit yourself or hiring a trained contractor)*

[www.seattle.gov/emergency/prepare/personal/home.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/emergency/prepare/personal/home.htm)  
206-233-5076

## Tool Lending Library

Phinney Neighborhood Assn.  
(206) 789-4993

## Contractor Referral

[www.seattle.gov/emergency/prepare/personal/home.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/emergency/prepare/personal/home.htm)  
206-233-5076

## Retrofitting Classes for Contractors

206-233-5076

## Home Retrofit Loans

City of Seattle  
Office of Housing's  
Home Repair Loans  
(206) 684-0458  
[HomeRepairLoan@seattle.gov](mailto:HomeRepairLoan@seattle.gov)

Also contact your local bank or credit union.

## How to Get A Permit from DPD

Plansets (two copies) may be submitted to the DPD Applicant Services Center (ASC) without an appointment for expedited review by a building plans reviewer. DPD's goal for completing review is 48 hours. An earthquake retrofit permit typically requires plan review, which can cost anywhere from \$350 to \$400 in permit fees, based on value of work. In order to encourage homeowners to retrofit their homes the fee has been reduced to a flat fee of \$155. A DPD building inspector will review your work onsite. For more information, visit [www.seattle.gov/dpd/quake](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/quake) or contact a permit specialist at the ASC, located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave., (206) 684-8850.

## What to Do If Your Home Doesn't Qualify

Homes which do not meet the structural criteria of this program are still candidates for seismic retrofitting. However, an architect or structural engineer will need to develop specific plans for your home and DPD will need more time to review those more unique proposals.

## Getting the Prescriptive Planset, Checklist and Guide

Seattle's prescriptive plansets are available at [www.seattle.gov/dpd/retrofit](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/retrofit) or from our Public Resource Center, located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave., (206) 684-8467.

You can also obtain these materials at either the Home Retrofit class for homeowners or the Home Retrofit training for contractors/building professionals (details to the left).



City of Seattle  
Department of Planning  
and Development

