# Reoccupying the Building — The Role of the Local Code Official



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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

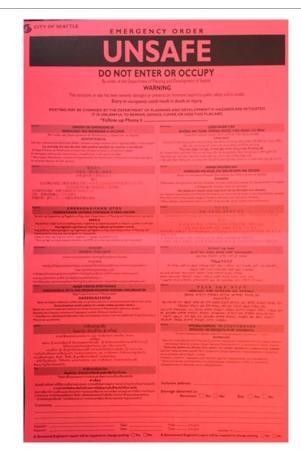
#### Notes:

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

#### Red Tag – Unsafe to Occupy

#### No entry allowed

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



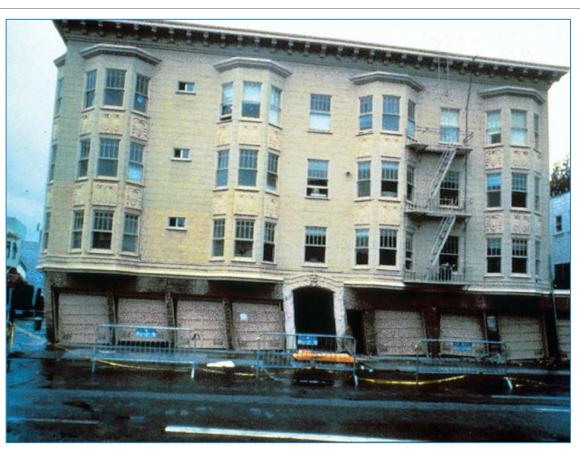
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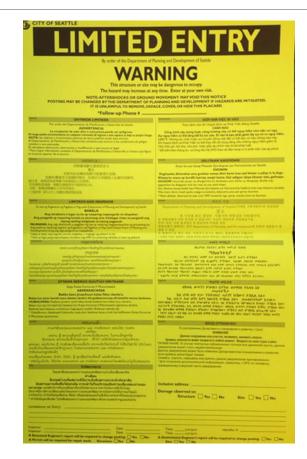
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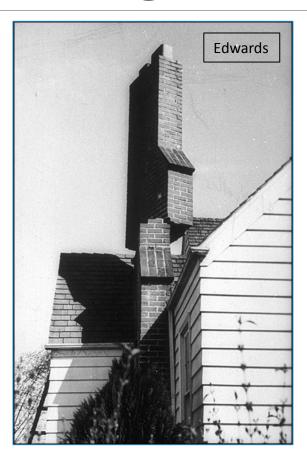


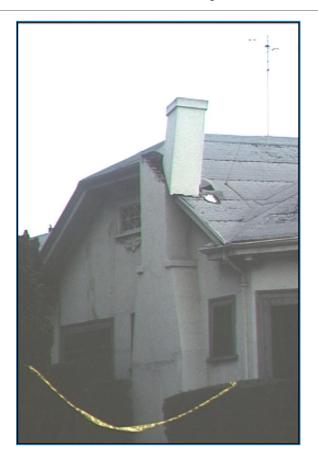
### Some limitation on use/occupancy

- Area
- Time

Wide range of damage









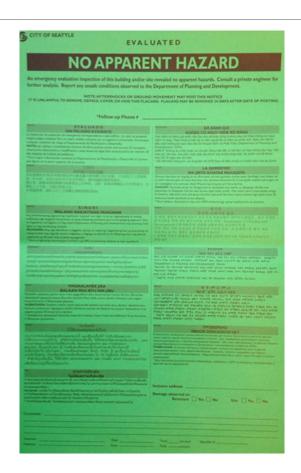


#### Green Tag — No Apparent Hazard

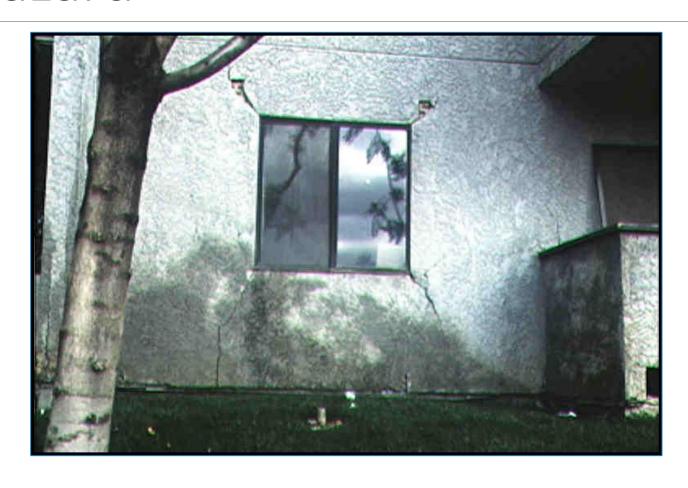
Unlimited occupancy allowed

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

 http://www.wabo.org/assets/SEAWPapers/wabo -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

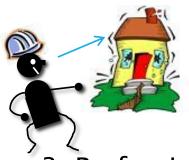
#### WABO/SEAW WHITE PAPER 5-2009



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



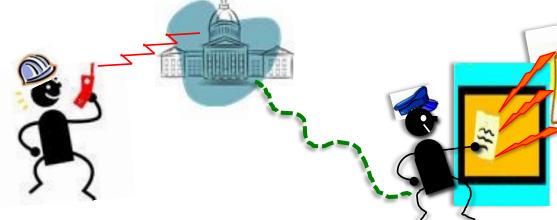
2. Event



3. Professional ATC-20 eval



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??