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Webinar to Examine How Earthquake Retrofits Protect Investments, Improve Safety on March 17

Making existing buildings more resilient safeguards residents, businesses, property owners and communities from earthquake hazards

LOS ANGELES, CA – Ways earthquake retrofits of existing buildings can protect residents, businesses, property owners and entire communities from devastating losses during major temblors will be the subject of “The Resilience Advantage,” webinar on Wednesday, March 17 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The webinar will include a 20-minute video with interviews of experts addressing earthquake retrofit issues, challenges and accomplishments. Interviews will deal with the seismic retrofit done to preserve the former St. Vibiana Cathedral built in 1876 in Los Angeles, legal liability facing property and business owners for earthquake losses, deaths and injuries, and how the renovation of older buildings in San Luis Obispo and Portland contributed to community revitalization and historic preservation.

An expert panel will examine how making communities more resilient benefits everyone by preserving jobs, housing, vital services and local economies. Examples will be discussed of how the public and private sectors are working to prepare buildings and communities to withstand the serious damage that can be caused by California’s greatest natural hazard – earthquakes.

Panel members are: Linda Dishman, President & CEO, Los Angeles Conservancy; Madison S. Spach, Jr., Attorney, Spach, Capaldi & Waggaman, LLP; Jonathan Cohen, Partner, The Society Hotel in Portland, Oregon; and David Cocke, S.E., President, Structural Focus



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Linda Dishman.
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Los Angeles
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Jonathan Cohen
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David Cocke, S.E.
President
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“Earthquakes can have devastating impacts on vulnerable buildings, people and our economy, but they don’t have to be disasters,” says U.S. Resiliency Council Executive Director Evan Reis. “Investing in resilience is good economics, sound business, and responsible public policy,” adds Reis. “This webinar shows how communities are becoming more resilient one building at a time.”

“California’s economy and quality of life is at risk when earthquakes strike,” says Optimum Seismic Co-Founder [Ali Sahabi](#), a leader in earthquake retrofitting and the resilience movement. “These webinars show property owners and businesses the importance of protecting their investments, tenants, employees and the community at-large as part of their business plans.”

“We must take earthquake threats seriously and act promptly,” adds Sahabi. “Owners risk building collapse, business failure, liability, bankruptcy and more. The bottom line is the economic benefits of earthquake retrofits and greater resilience are impossible --- and *dangerous* – to ignore.” [The Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) presented a major report to Congress in January recommending greater retrofitting of existing buildings along with six other recommendations. FEMA has estimated 40 percent of businesses that close their doors as a result of disasters will never reopen. When buildings collapse, businesses close and communities are hurt as workers lose their livelihoods and housing. Recovery can take years, if not decades.

USC researchers estimated Southern California could suffer property damage of \$113 billion in a major temblor, with additional business-related impacts of \$68 billion or more. Estimates put damages caused by a magnitude-7 earthquake on the [Puente Hills](#) fault running through downtown Los Angeles at more than \$252 billion with thousands killed and hundreds of thousands displaced.

More than 90 percent of buildings in California’s urban areas are estimated to not comply with modern building codes. Many vulnerable buildings can be made safer by earthquake retrofits.

In addition to the costs of physical damage, business interruption and lost market share caused by earthquakes, courts have determined property owners can be held legally liable for deaths and injuries occurring in their buildings if they are found negligent of maintaining a hazardous condition by not taking reasonable actions to safeguard their facilities.

The Resilience Advantage webinars are exploring throughout 2021 how improved resilience can safeguard California’s businesses and communities in the face of natural hazards such as earthquakes, wildfires, floods, and pandemics. Upcoming webinar dates and topics include:

March 17 **Earthquake Retrofits Protect Investments, Improve Safety** 11 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
Program Champions:
Los Angeles County Business Federation
Los Angeles Conservancy

April 21 **Sustainability & Resilience – A Natural Connection** 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Program Champions:
United States Green Building Council LA
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.

To register for complimentary *The Resilience Advantage* webinars visit optimumseismic.com/the-resilience-advantage/. For additional information call Optimum Seismic at 323-605-0312.

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Attachments:

Webinar Video – 1 minute - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1dng71B3wg&t>