Renter and Mobile Home Earthquake Preparation
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In this month’s bulletin, the City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department will cover earthquake preparation for renters and reinforcement of mobile homes.

Renters
Before renting, check for these dangers:

- Structures made of unreinforced brick or block walls which can collapse and cause great loss of life.
- “Tuck under” parking spaces (a bottom floor without walls giving the building the appearance of being on stilts over a parking lot) which can be dangerous if not retrofitted properly.
- Foundation and cripple wall failures which can cause expensive damage. Images and explanations of foundational issues and cripple walls can be found at http://www.cert-la.com/BAS-How-You-Can-Strengthen-Your-Home.pdf
- Objects attached to the sides of buildings, such as staircases, balconies, and decorations, which can break off in earthquakes.
- If the building has any major structural issues, consider renting elsewhere.

Ask your landlord these questions:

- Can I secure furniture to the walls?
- What retrofitting has been done on the building?
- Have the water heaters been strapped with California approved systems to the wall studs?

Mobile Home Residents
Mobile homes need "engineered tie-down systems" or "earthquake-resistant bracing systems" (ERBS):

- As a metal bracing device, an ERBS may have a vertical pole in the center supported by 4 or 6 diagonal poles that start away from the base and come together at the top like a pyramid. Look for the ERBS beneath your home.
- An ERBS should have a label on the bracing that states, "Complies with the California Administrative Code, Title 25, Chapter 2, Article 7.5."
- A metal or wood "skirt" on the outside with concrete blocks or steel tripods or jacks supporting your home is NOT enough.

Insurance Policies

- Earthquake insurance policies are available to renters, mobile home residents and condominium residents.
- Renters may want insurance to insure personal property, or cover emergency repairs.
- Keep copies of your earthquake insurance policies in a lockable, durable box to grab in an emergency.

Additional Resources:

- http://www.californiarocks.com/renters-policies
- http://www.sba.com/
- Contact the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety by calling 3-1-1 or visiting their site http://ladbs.org/LADBSWeb/public-home.jsf for the location nearest you.

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