

AB 300 Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What does the report mean?

- The report is an inventory of public school buildings constructed of concrete, masonry, and steel and submitted to the Division of the State Architect (DSA) before July 1, 1978 (prior to implementation of the 1976 Uniform Building Code). Wood frame buildings were not part of the survey.
- Report was provided to the Governor and the Legislature to quantify the scope of seismic risk in public schools and make recommendations about future ideas to address the problems found in the inventory.
- Survey was conducted from archival records of DSA-approved file sets for **new** construction projects and did **not** include alterations, additions, relocatable buildings or rehabilitation projects. The inventory is based on review of approximately 16,000 of 42,000 total projects received prior to July 1, 1978.
- Reviews consisted of quick evaluation by structural engineers of existing plans to determine the type of building construction, square footage, and lateral force resisting systems. Seismic forces and distance from a fault were determined using California Division of Mines and Geology maps.
- **Report did not rank or identify specific buildings that may be at risk.**

2. Are any of my buildings on the list? If so, which ones?

- The inventory is a statewide statistical database and will have substantial variability for any specific school district. **The school district may have buildings that are not within the database.**
- Upon request, DSA will provide a list of identified buildings based on application number, date of submittal of application, name of school at time of submittal and type of building.
- Be aware that the accuracy of a finding pertaining to a specific building might vary from current school site or district configurations. It is not uncommon for names of schools, building designations or building use to have been changed since the time of application submittal.

3. If my building(s) are on the list, what should I do next?

- DSA recommends that a districtwide survey of all campuses be conducted by a California licensed structural engineer to identify buildings that may pose a seismic risk and assist the district in prioritizing necessary actions to be taken.
- A more detailed evaluation, and possibly retrofit design, of identified buildings should be undertaken in order of priority and available funding.

4. How will I fund any necessary retrofit work?

- The AB 300 report was originally intended only to provide information to enable policymakers to make informed, cost-effective decisions to address the problem.
- Contact the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) regarding state funding available for school construction projects.

5. What can DSA do for us?

- Upon request, DSA will make available plans and records to districts for specified school buildings. DSA may charge fees to recover costs associated with retrieval and duplication of the documents.
- After identification and assessment by the district of at risk buildings, DSA will be available for pre-retrofit evaluation and design consultations.
- DSA will be available for consultation and advice on necessary testing of existing materials and construction during the evaluation phase.

6. What survey tools should we use to evaluate an existing building?

- For an initial evaluation of a building, DSA recommends a Tier One evaluation, either FEMA 310: Handbook for the Seismic Evaluation of Existing Buildings or ASCE 31-03. A Tier Two evaluation may be utilized at the district's discretion.
- A detailed evaluation and rehabilitation design shall follow Title 24 provisions.

7. If a building has been modernized, does that mean it has been seismically retrofitted?

- Most modernization projects do not have a seismic retrofit component. Check with the architect for the modernization project to determine if a seismic retrofit was included.
- The California Building Code requires seismic retrofits for projects when the construction cost of the modernization project exceeds 50 percent of the replacement cost of the building.

8. How do I determine the Seismic Vulnerability Category for buildings on the list?

- Table 2 on page 12 of the report shows the grouping of the structural systems for the Seismic Vulnerability Category. Each building on the inventory list has been assigned a structural system. By comparing the structural system of the specific building with the structural systems shown in Table 12, the Seismic Vulnerability Category can be determined.

9. Must a building be shown on the AB 300 list to qualify for Proposition 1D funding?

- No.

10. Are schools required by law to do anything about their Category 2 buildings?

- No.

11. Why do sold, demolished or not in use buildings still show on the AB 300 list?

- Buildings remain on the list, with current status, so that questions regarding earlier versions of the list can be answered.

12. Why are there buildings listed that do not belong to my district?

- Many possible causes. It may have been a data entry error on the original survey data base. District boundaries may have shifted since the building was constructed, and the school was absorbed by an expanding district, or split away as new districts formed. Notifying DSA of any inaccurately assigned buildings can generally clear this up quickly.
- Sometimes school names change, or old names are transposed to newly constructed buildings or campuses. This can complicate connecting the buildings on the list to buildings on the ground.
- Finally, DSA may have reviewed and approved plans for a new building, but our archives do not reflect a district's subsequent decision not to build.

13. Why would there be qualifying buildings on campuses in my district that do not appear on the list?

- Buildings constructed before the Field Act became law (1933) would not be in the DSA records as DSA was not involved in school construction prior to the Act. Hence these buildings would not have been captured by the original AB 300 survey.
- It is possible buildings were missed for other reasons.