



State Mining and Geology Board

SEISMIC HAZARD MAPPING ACT STATUTES

2690. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.

2691. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failure account for approximately 95 percent of economic losses caused by an earthquake.

(b) Areas subject to these processes during an earthquake have not been identified or mapped statewide, despite the fact that scientific techniques are available to do so.

(c) It is necessary to identify and map seismic hazard zones in order for cities and counties to adequately prepare the safety element of their general plans and to encourage land use management policies and regulations to reduce and mitigate those hazards to protect public health and safety.

2692. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide for a statewide seismic hazard mapping and technical advisory program to assist cities and counties in fulfilling their responsibilities for protecting the public health and safety from the effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failure and other seismic hazards caused by earthquakes.

(b) It is further the intent of the Legislature that maps and accompanying information provided pursuant to this chapter be made available to local governments for planning and development purposes.

(c) It is further the intent of the Legislature that the Division of Mines and Geology, in implementing this chapter, shall, to the extent possible, coordinate its activities with, and use existing information generated from, the earthquake fault zones mapping program pursuant to Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 2621), the landslide hazard identification program pursuant to Chapter 7.7 (commencing with Section 2670), and the inundation maps prepared pursuant to Section 8589.5 of the Government Code.

2692.1. The State Geologist may include in maps compiled pursuant to this chapter information on the potential effects of tsunami and seiche when information becomes available from other sources and the State Geologist determines the information is appropriate for use by local government. The State Geologist shall not be required to provide this information unless additional funding is provided both to make the determination and to distribute the tsunami and seiche information.

2693. As used in this chapter:

(a) "City" and "county" includes the City and County of San Francisco.

(b) "Geotechnical report" means a report prepared by a certified engineering geologist or a civil engineer practicing within the area of his or her competence, which identifies seismic hazards and recommends mitigation measures to reduce the risk of seismic hazard to acceptable levels.

(c) "Mitigation" means those measures that are consistent with established practice and that will reduce seismic risk to acceptable levels.

(d) "Project" has the same meaning as in Chapter 7.5 (commencing with Section 2621), except as follows:

(1) A single-family dwelling otherwise qualifying as a project may be exempted by the city or county having jurisdiction of the project.

(2) "Project" does not include alterations or additions to any structure within a seismic hazard zone which do not exceed either 50 percent of the value of the structure or 50 percent of the existing floor area of the structure.

(e) "Commission" means the Seismic Safety Commission.

(f) "Board" means the State Mining and Geology Board.

2694. (a) A person who is acting as an agent for a transferor of real property that is located within a seismic hazard zone, as designated under this chapter, or the transferor, if he or she is acting without an agent, shall disclose to any prospective transferee the fact that the property is located within a seismic hazard zone.

(b) Disclosure is required pursuant to this section only when one of the following conditions is met:

(1) The transferor, or transferor's agent, has actual knowledge that the property is within a seismic hazard zone.

(2) A map that includes the property has been provided to the city or county pursuant to Section 2622, and a notice has been posted at the offices of the county recorder, county assessor, and county planning agency that identifies the location of the map and any information regarding changes to the map received by the county.

(c) In all transactions that are subject to Section 1103 of the Civil Code, the disclosure required by subdivision (a) of this section shall be provided by either of the following means:

(1) The Local Option Real Estate Transfer Disclosure Statement as provided in Section 1102.6a of the Civil Code.

(2) The Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement as provided in Section 1103.2 of the Civil Code.

(d) If the map or accompanying information is not of sufficient accuracy or scale that a reasonable person can determine if the subject real property is included in a seismic hazard zone, the agent shall mark "Yes" on the Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement. The agent may mark "No" on the Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement if he or she attaches a report prepared pursuant to subdivision (c) of

Section 1103.4 of the Civil Code that verifies the property is not in the hazard zone. Nothing in this subdivision is intended to limit or abridge any existing duty of the transferor or the transferor's agents to exercise reasonable care in making a determination under this subdivision.

(e) For purposes of the disclosures required by this section, the following persons shall not be deemed agents of the transferor:

(1) Persons specified in Section 1103.11 of the Civil Code.

(2) Persons acting under a power of sale regulated by Section 2924 of the Civil Code.

(f) For purposes of this section, Section 1103.13 of the Civil Code applies.

(g) The specification of items for disclosure in this section does not limit or abridge any obligation for disclosure created by any other provision of law or that may exist in order to avoid fraud, misrepresentation, or deceit in the transfer transaction.

2695. (a) On or before January 1, 1992, the board, in consultation with the director and the commission, shall develop all of the following:

(1) Guidelines for the preparation of maps of seismic hazard zones in the state.

(2) Priorities for mapping of seismic hazard zones. In setting priorities, the board shall take into account the following factors:

(A) The population affected by the seismic hazard in the event of an earthquake.

(B) The probability that the seismic hazard would threaten public health and safety in the event of an earthquake.

(C) The willingness of lead agencies and other public agencies to share the cost of mapping within their jurisdiction.

(D) The availability of existing information.

(3) Policies and criteria regarding the responsibilities of cities, counties, and state agencies pursuant to this chapter. The policies and criteria shall address, but not be limited to, the following:

(A) Criteria for approval of a project within a seismic hazard zone, including mitigation measures.

(B) The contents of the geotechnical report.

(C) Evaluation of the geotechnical report by the lead agency.

(4) Guidelines for evaluating seismic hazards and recommending mitigation measures.

(5) Any necessary procedures, including, but not limited to, processing of waivers pursuant to Section 2697, to facilitate the implementation of this chapter.

(b) In developing the policies and criteria pursuant to subdivision (a), the board shall consult with and consider the recommendations of an advisory committee, appointed by the board in consultation with the commission, composed of the following members:

(1) An engineering geologist registered in the state.

- (2) A seismologist.
 - (3) A civil engineer registered in the state.
 - (4) A structural engineer registered in the state.
 - (5) A representative of city government, selected from a list submitted by the League of California Cities.
 - (6) A representative of county government, selected from a list submitted by the County Supervisors Association of California.
 - (7) A representative of regional government, selected from a list submitted by the Council of Governments.
 - (8) A representative of the insurance industry.
 - (9) The Insurance Commissioner.
- All of the members of the advisory committee shall have expertise in the field of seismic hazards or seismic safety.

(c) At least 90 days prior to adopting measures pursuant to this section, the board shall transmit or cause to be transmitted a draft of those measures to affected cities, counties, and state agencies for review and comment.

2696. (a) The State Geologist shall compile maps identifying seismic hazard zones, consistent with the requirements of Section

2695. (a) The maps shall be compiled in accordance with a time schedule developed by the director and based upon the provisions of Section 2695 and the level of funding available to implement this chapter.

(b) The State Geologist shall, upon completion, submit seismic hazard maps compiled pursuant to subdivision (a) to the board and all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for review and comment. Concerned jurisdictions and agencies shall submit all comments to the board for review and consideration within 90 days. Within 90 days of board review, the State Geologist shall revise the maps, as appropriate, and shall provide copies of the official maps to each state agency, city, or county, including the county recorder, having jurisdiction over lands containing an area of seismic hazard. The county recorder shall record all information transmitted as part of the public record.

(c) In order to ensure that sellers of real property and their agents are adequately informed, any county that receives an official map pursuant to this section shall post a notice within five days of receipt of the map at the office of the county recorder, county assessor, and county planning agency, identifying the location of the map, any information regarding changes to the map, and the effective date of the notice.

2697. (a) Cities and counties shall require, prior to the approval of a project located in a seismic hazard zone, a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard. If the city or county finds that no undue hazard of this kind exists, based on information resulting from studies conducted on sites in the

immediate vicinity of the project and of similar soil composition to the project site, the geotechnical report may be waived. After a report has been approved or a waiver granted, subsequent geotechnical reports shall not be required, provided that new geologic datum, or data, warranting further investigation is not recorded. Each city and county shall submit one copy of each approved geotechnical report, including the mitigation measures, if any, that are to be taken, to the State Geologist within 30 days of its approval of the report.

(b) In meeting the requirements of this section, cities and counties shall consider the policies and criteria established pursuant to this chapter. If a project's approval is not in accordance with the policies and criteria, the city or county shall explain the reasons for the differences in writing to the State Geologist, within 30 days of the project's approval.

2698. Nothing in this chapter is intended to prevent cities and counties from establishing policies and criteria which are more strict than those established by the board.

2699. Each city and county, in preparing the safety element to its general plan pursuant to subdivision (g) of Section 65302 of the Government Code, and in adopting or revising land use planning and permitting ordinances, shall take into account the information provided in available seismic hazard maps.

2699.5. (a) There is hereby created the Seismic Hazards Identification Fund, as a special fund in the State Treasury.

(b) Upon appropriation by the Legislature, the moneys in the Strong-Motion Instrumentation and Seismic Hazards Mapping Fund shall be allocated to the division for purposes of this chapter and Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 2700).

(c) On and after July 1, 2004, the Seismic Hazards Identification Fund shall be known as the Strong-Motion Instrumentation and Seismic Hazards Mapping Fund.

2699.6. This chapter shall become operative on April 1, 1991.