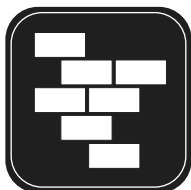




# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDINGS



Department of Building Inspection  
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*May 2003*



## WHAT IS AN UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDING (UMB)?

An unreinforced masonry building (UMB) is a masonry building, generally made of brick, constructed without the benefit of reinforcement. UMBs have been identified as being hazardous in the event of an earthquake and have a strong likelihood of failing, either by the collapse of walls or the entire building.



## IS A BUILDING CONSTRUCTED OF PLAIN CONCRETE REQUIRED TO BE STRENGTHENED UNDER THE CURRENT UMB PROGRAM?

Yes, Section 1603C of the San Francisco Building Code (SFBC) includes unreinforced plain concrete buildings as UMBs.



## WHAT IS THE UMB ORDINANCE? HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM THE PREVIOUS PARAPET SAFETY PROGRAM?

In 1992, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance No. 225-92 (also known as UMB Ordinance) that requires:

- ❶ all owners of UMB's be notified of this potential hazard;
- ❷ all owners retain a licensed Civil, Structural Engineer or Architect to file a Building Inventory Form with the City to identify the hazard class of a UMB building;
- ❸ all owners seismically upgrade the buildings per the requirements and time frame identified in Ordinance No. 225-92.

The UMB program is different from the previous Parapet Safety Program in that the Parapet Safety Program of 1975 addressed the safety requirements of the parapet in a building roof, while the UMB program addresses the seismic safety of the entire building structure.



## AS A UMB BUILDING OWNER, WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

You are required to comply with the requirements in the UMB Ordinance. First, you need to retain a licensed architect or civil or structural engineer to inspect and evaluate the UMB. After inspection, they are required to file a Building Inventory Form with their findings with the Seismic Safety Division of the Department of Building Inspection. According to the definition given in SFBC, Chapter 16B, Section 1604B, an architect or engineer would assign a risk level ranging from 1 to 4 to the building. Based on the risk level assigned to the building, a building owner needs to comply with the Ordinance according to the following schedule.



## MY UMB WENT THROUGH SOME SEISMIC STRENGTHENING BEFORE AND IT WAS NOT DAMAGED IN THE 1989 LOMA PRIETA EARTHQUAKE. DO I NEED TO DO ANY MORE WORK NOW?

The UMB Ordinance exempts buildings which were strengthened to conform to the requirements of Section 104(f) of the SFBC in effect after May 21, 1973. UMBs which were strengthened prior to May 21, 1973

Risk Level of Building	Submit Inventory Form to DBI	Apply for Building Permit with Plans or Apply for Demolition	Obtain Building Permit	Complete Structural Alteration
1	Feb. 15, 1994	Feb. 15, 1995	Aug. 15, 1995	Aug. 15, 1996
2	Feb. 15, 1994	Aug. 15, 1995	Feb. 15, 1996	Feb. 15, 1998
3	Feb. 15, 1994	Feb. 15, 2001	Feb. 15, 2002	Feb. 15, 2004
4	Feb. 15, 1994	Feb. 15, 2003	Feb. 15, 2004	Feb. 15, 2006

or which do not comply with the Section 104(f) provisions are subject to the requirements of the UMB Ordinance.



### WHICH BUILDINGS ARE EXEMPTED FROM THE UMB PROGRAM?

Unreinforced masonry buildings of single family occupancy and multi-unit apartments containing less than five dwelling units or guest rooms used solely for residential purposes are exempted from the current UMB Ordinance.



### IF I STRENGTHEN MY UMB NOW ACCORDING TO THE CURRENT ORDINANCE, WILL MY BUILDING STILL BE SUBJECT TO FURTHER SEISMIC RETROFITTING REQUIREMENTS IN THE FUTURE?

It is the present intent of the Board of Supervisors that, absent a compelling public safety necessity, buildings strengthened pursuant to the UMB Ordinance will not be subject to future mandatory seismic retrofitting legislation adopted by the Board.



### DOES SEISMIC RETROFIT TRIGGER UPGRADES TO EXISTING ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL SYSTEMS IN A UMB?

For UMB retrofit construction, Chapter 16B, Sec. 1606B of SFBC does not require alteration of existing electrical, plumbing, mechanical, fire protection or life-safety systems which were in compliance with the code in effect at the time of their construction. Furthermore, the provisions of the Commercial and Residential Energy Conservation Ordinances are not applicable to buildings altered as required by the UMB Ordinance, unless the alteration work also constitutes a change of occupancy or an increase of the conditioned space or alterations to the lighting or mechanical systems. However, this Ordinance does not exempt any building from compliance

with the requirements of state or federal disability access regulations.



### WHICH BUILDINGS ARE EXEMPTED FROM THE DISABILITY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS?

Privately owned apartments and residential hotels of R-1 residential occupancy, whether or not funded by Proposition A of 1992, administered under the Seismic Loan Program, are exempted from compliance of the disability access standards in existing units.



### WHAT ARE THE DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES ON DISABILITY ACCESS COMPLIANCE?

For UMB strengthening work only, with no alteration to the existing structure, the guidelines for disability access compliance are as follows:

- ♿ Existing apartments or residential hotels are exempted.
- ♿ Residential hotel, for this purpose, is defined as residential unit of single room occupancy in which the tenant is expected to reside for more than 31 days.
- ♿ Strengthening work for roof is exempted.
- ♿ For buildings of mixed transient and residential hotel occupancy, the transient hotel room areas need to comply.
- ♿ Existing commercial units need to comply.
- ♿ For new additions or alterations, the areas of remodeling need to comply.



### DOES THE CITY HAVE FUNDING TO ASSIST OWNERS WITH THE RETROFIT OF THEIR UMB BUILDINGS?

Yes. In 1992, San Francisco voters authorized the issuance of \$350 million in bonds to make loans available to UMB owners. \$150 million is set aside for low interest loans (2.5%) to retrofit buildings

containing affordable housing. Buildings that contain highly affordable housing may be eligible to apply for loans whose interest and principal is deferred. The remaining \$200 million can be used to retrofit all other types of UMB's. These loans carry an interest rate of 8.5%. All seismic safety loans are fully amortized over a 20 year term.

In exchange for a low interest or deferred loan, the borrower will be required to enter into a regulatory agreement with the City to ensure that the retrofitted units remain affordable to and occupied by persons who are low income.



### WHAT ARE THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF OWNERS TO TENANTS OF UMB'S?

The Board of Supervisors passed a series of ordinances setting out the rights of residential tenants of UMB's. There are no legal requirements for how building owners must deal with commercial tenants.

Residential tenants must be given the following notices before a seismic retrofit project may proceed:

- 1 90 Day Notice
- 2 30 Day Notice to Tenants Who Must Relocate
- 3 30 Day Notice to Tenants Eligible for Rent Reductions
- 4 24 Hour Notice
- 5 Language Assistance Form
- 6 Affidavit for UMB Tenant Notices and Lobby Sign
- 7 Notice to Applicant for Building Permit - Sign Posting Required

Failure to provide tenants with the required notice will result in revocation of the building permit and costly delays to retrofit projects.

UMB owners have several options for accommodating tenants impacted by seismic retrofit. The owner may offer the tenant a comparable unit in the same building or the payment of \$33 per tenant per day. If the owner chooses to have the

tenant remain in the unit during construction, then the tenant is eligible for rent reductions due to loss of use of the unit.

For more detailed information, please review the tenant information packet available at the Department of Building Inspection. The Tenant Monitor of the UMB Program is available to assist owners and tenants in creating Tenant Accommodation Plans. Please call Mr. Vernon Takasuka at (415) 558-6631 should you desire assistance.

The Department has issued code ruling BC-UMB-2, tenant inconvenience and preparation plan for residential UMB. The owner or owner's agent must arrange a preconstruction conference prior to issuance of the permit. To arrange a preconstruction conference please contact tenant monitor-Mr. Vernon Takasuka at (415) 558-6631.

PLEASE NOTE TENANT PROTECTION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO ALL SEISMIC RETROFIT PROJECTS, NOT JUST PROJECTS FINANCED WITH CITY LOANS.



### WHO SHOULD I CONTACT, IF I NEED TO FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE UMB PROGRAM?

Yan Yan Chew is the manager of the UMB program. He can be reached at (415) 558-6101. For any technical information regarding the UMB Ordinance, permit and construction requirements, please contact Mr. Gary Ho, of the Seismic Safety Division, at (415) 558-6083. For inspection issues, please contact Mr. Jerry Sullivan, building inspector, at 558-6059. The office of the Seismic Safety Division is located at 1660 Mission Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103.

For questions regarding the UMB Bond Loan Program, you may call Mr. Wayne Lawrence, UMB Seismic Safety Loan at 415-554-6936. The office of the UMB Seismic Loan Program is located at 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 448, San Francisco, CA 94102.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION

1660 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 558-6088 Information - (415) 558-6401 Fax  
[www.sfgov.org/dbi](http://www.sfgov.org/dbi)

The Department of Building Inspection is charged with implementing and enforcing local, state, and federal regulations and controls that govern the design, construction, quality, use, occupancy, and location of buildings and structures within the City and County of San Francisco. A seven-member Building Inspection Commission governs the Department.

## FRANK Y. CHIU, DIRECTOR

**6TH FLOOR** .....558-6131 Office ... 558-6225 Fax

## AMY LEE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

**6TH FLOOR** .....558-6250 Office ... 558-6515 Fax

## WILLIAM WONG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PERMIT SERVICES

**2ND FLOOR** .....558-6139 Office ... 558-6436 Fax

## JIM HUTCHINSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INSPECTION SERVICES

**3RD FLOOR** .....558-6142 Office ... 558-6435 Fax

## ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DIVISION (AFD) - 1650 Mission St., 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6323 Office ... 558-6207 Fax

Provides support to the Department in the areas of fiscal management, purchasing, employee services, and related data collection.

## BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION (BID) - 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6096 Office ... 558-6261 Fax

Inspects buildings for compliance with building code requirements for building permits and responds to complaints on residential and commercial buildings. Building Inspectors' Office Hours - 7:30a.m. to 8:30a.m. and 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m.

## CENTRAL PERMIT BUREAU (CPB) - 1ST Floor

Manager .....558-6070 Office ... 558-6170 Fax

Issues building, plumbing and electrical permits; collects fees for processing applications for DBI and other City agencies.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT SECTION (CES) -1650 Mission St., 3rd Floor

Supervisor .....558-6454 Office ... 558-6635 Fax

Responsible for abatement of code violation cases referred from the building, plumbing, and electrical divisions.

## COMMERCIAL PLAN CHECK (CPC) - 2ND Floor

Manager .....558-6133 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

Screens, reviews, and approves commercial tenant improvement applications for compliance with building, and disabled access regulations.

## DISABLED ACCESS SECTION (DAS) - 3RD Floor

Supervisor .....558-6014 Office ... 558-6474 Fax

Responsible for the intake and resolution of all complaints filed by the public regarding disabled access citywide.

## ELECTRICAL INSPECTION DIVISION (EID) - 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6030 Office ... 558-6397 Fax

Provides public safety by enforcing municipal and State regulations and codes relative to construction, alteration, and installation of electrical equipment and systems. Electrical Inspectors' Office Hours - 7:30a.m. to 8:30a.m. and 3:15p.m. to 4:00p.m.

## HOUSING INSPECTION SERVICES (HIS) - 6TH Floor

Manager .....558-6220 Office ... 558-6249 Fax

Inspects buildings for code compliance in residential housing under building permits or as a result of complaints and inspects apartments and hotels. Housing Inspectors' Office Hours - 8:00a.m. to 9:00a.m. and 4:00p.m. to 5:00p.m.

## LEAD ABATEMENT SECTION (LAS) - 1650 Mission St., 3rd Floor

Supervisor .....558-6598 Office ... 558-6635 Fax

Responsible for environmental health and safety of DBI and applicable health and safety regulations and inspection of buildings for lead paint-exterior work practices. Provides a mentor/intern employment program for DBI.

## MAJOR PROJECTS/UMB'S - 2ND Floor

Manager .....558-6133 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

Reviews applications and plans for compliance with building, and disabled access regulations.

## MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MIS) - 1650 Mission St., 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6400 Office ... 558-6467 Fax

Provides automated data capture, data management, and report dissemination throughout the Department.

## MECHANICAL PLAN CHECK (MECH) - 2ND Floor

Manager .....558-6133 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

Screens, and reviews applications and plans for compliance with mechanical and energy codes.

## ONE-STOP PERMIT COORDINATION (OSP) - 1ST Floor

Manager .....558-6649 Office ... 558-6660 Fax

Provides parallel review and screening for complex residential as well as commercial projects that require multi-departmental review.

## PERSONNEL PAYROLL DIVISION (PPD) - 1650 Mission St., 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6343 Office ... 558-6636 Fax

Provides support to the Department in the areas of personnel, payroll, and other related Human Resources activities.

## PLAN CHECK SERVICES - 2ND Floor

Manager .....558-6133 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

Provides managerial support to Commercial Plan Check Division, Major Project/UMB Division, Mechanical Plan Check Division, and Residential Plan Check Division.

## PLUMBING INSPECTION DIVISION (PID) - 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6054 Office ... 558-6178 Fax

Provides public safety by enforcing municipal and State regulations and codes relative to construction, alteration, and installation of plumbing equipment and systems. Plumbing Inspectors' Office Hours - 7:30a.m. to 8:30a.m. and 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m.

## PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION (PSD) - 1ST Floor

Manager .....558-6130 Office ... 558-6605 Fax

Serves as the first point of contact for the public, answers general questions; gives permit status and information. Management, processing, and updating of all microfilm services and residential records.

## RESIDENTIAL PLAN CHECK (RPC) - 2ND Floor

Manager .....558-6133 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

Screens, reviews, and approves residential applications and plans for compliance with building, and disabled access regulations.

## TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION (TSD) - 1650 Mission Street, 3RD Floor

Manager .....558-6205 Office ... 558-6688 Fax

Provides technical support for the Department in the areas of code development and information, and earthquake/emergency program.

## BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

### Abatement Appeals Board (AAB)

Jim Hutchinson, Dept. Representative ... 558-6142 Office ... 558-6435 Fax

### Access Appeals Commission (AAC)

Rafael Torres-Gil, Dept. Rep. .... 558-6010 Office ... 558-6474 Fax

### Board of Examiners (BOE)

Wing Lau, Dept. Representative ... 558-6135 Office ... 558-6261 Fax

### Code Advisory Committee (BCAC)

Alan Tokugawa, Dept. Rep. .... 558-6004 Office ... 558-6688 Fax

### Unreinforced Masonry Buildings Appeals Board (UMB)

Gary Ho, Dept. Representative ... 558-6083 Office ... 558-6041 Fax

5/6/2003

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