

CALIFORNIA CODES  
PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE  
SECTION 2621-2630

**2621.** This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.

**2621.5.** (a) It is the purpose of this chapter to provide for the adoption and administration of zoning laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations by cities and counties in implementation of the general plan that is in effect in any city or county. The Legislature declares that this chapter is intended to provide policies and criteria to assist cities, counties, and state agencies in the exercise of their responsibility to prohibit the location of developments and structures for human occupancy across the trace of active faults. Further, it is the intent of this chapter to provide the citizens of the state with increased safety and to minimize the loss of life during and immediately following earthquakes by facilitating seismic retrofitting to strengthen buildings, including historical buildings, against ground shaking.

(b) This chapter is applicable to any project, as defined in Section **2621.6**, which is located within a delineated earthquake fault zone, upon issuance of the official earthquake fault zones maps to affected local jurisdictions, except as provided in Section **2621.7**.

(c) The implementation of this chapter shall be pursuant to policies and criteria established and adopted by the board.

**2621.6.** (a) As used in this chapter, "project" means either of the following:

(1) Any subdivision of land which is subject to the Subdivision Map Act (Division 2 (commencing with Section 66410) of Title 7 of the Government Code), and which contemplates the eventual construction of structures for human occupancy.

(2) Structures for human occupancy, with the exception of either of the following:

(A) Single-family wood-frame or steel-frame dwellings to be built on parcels of land for which geologic reports have been approved pursuant to paragraph (1).

(B) A single-family wood-frame or steel-frame dwelling not exceeding two stories when that dwelling is not part of a development of four or more dwellings.

(b) For the purposes of this chapter, a mobilehome whose body width exceeds eight feet shall be considered to be a single-family wood-frame dwelling not exceeding two stories.

**2621.7.** This chapter, except Section **2621.9**, shall not apply to any of the following:

(a) The conversion of an existing apartment complex into a condominium.

(b) Any development or structure in existence prior to May 4, 1975, except for an alteration or addition to a structure that

exceeds the value limit specified in subdivision (c).

(c) An alteration or addition to any structure if the value of the alteration or addition does not exceed 50 percent of the value of the structure.

(d) (1) Any structure located within the jurisdiction of the City of Berkeley or the City of Oakland which was damaged by fire between October 20, 1991, and October 23, 1991, if granted an exemption pursuant to this subdivision.

(2) The city may apply to the State Geologist for an exemption and the State Geologist shall grant the exemption only if the structure located within the earthquake fault zone is not situated upon a trace of an active fault line, as delineated in the official earthquake fault zone map or in more recent geologic data, as determined by the State Geologist.

(3) When requesting an exemption, the city shall submit to the State Geologist all of the following information:

(A) Maps noting the parcel numbers of proposed building sites that are at least 50 feet from an identified fault and a statement that there is not any more recent information to indicate a geologic hazard.

(B) Identification of any sites that are within 50 feet of an identified fault.

(C) Proof that the property owner has been notified that the granting of an exemption is not any guarantee that a geologic hazard does not exist.

(4) The granting of the exemption does not relieve a seller of real property or an agent for the seller of the obligation to disclose to a prospective purchaser that the property is located within a delineated earthquake fault zone, as required by Section 2621.9.

(e) (1) Alterations that include seismic retrofitting, as defined in Section 8894.2 of the Government **Code**, to any of the following listed types of buildings in existence prior to May 4, 1975:

(A) Unreinforced masonry buildings, as described in subdivision (a) of Section 8875 of the Government **Code**.

(B) Concrete tilt-up buildings, as described in Section 8893 of the Government **Code**.

(C) Reinforced concrete moment resisting frame buildings as described in Applied Technology Council Report 21 (FEMA Report 154).

(2) The exemption granted by paragraph (1) shall not apply unless a city or county acts in accordance with all of the following:

(A) The building permit issued by the city or county for the alterations authorizes no greater human occupancy load, regardless of proposed use, than that authorized for the existing use permitted at the time the city or county grants the exemption. This may be accomplished by the city or county making a human occupancy load determination that is based on, and no greater than, the existing authorized use, and including that determination on the building permit application as well as a statement substantially as follows: "Under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of Section 2621.7 of the Public **Resources Code**, the occupancy load is limited to the occupancy load for the last lawful use authorized or existing prior to the issuance of this building permit, as determined by the city or county."

(B) The city or county requires seismic retrofitting, as defined in Section 8894.2 of the Government **Code**, which is necessary to strengthen the entire structure and provide increased resistance to ground shaking from earthquakes.

(C) Exemptions granted pursuant to paragraph (1) are reported in writing to the State Geologist within 30 days of the building permit

issuance date.

(3) Any structure with human occupancy restrictions under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) shall not be granted a new building permit that allows an increase in human occupancy unless a geologic report, prepared pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 3603 of Title 14 of the California **Code** of Regulations in effect on January 1, 1994, demonstrates that the structure is not on the trace of an active fault, or the requirement of a geologic report has been waived pursuant to Section 2623.

(4) A qualified historical building within an earthquake fault zone that is exempt pursuant to this subdivision may be repaired or seismically retrofitted using the State Historical Building **Code**, except that, notwithstanding any provision of that building **code** and its implementing regulations, paragraph (2) shall apply.

**2621.8.** Notwithstanding Section 818.2 of the Government **Code**, a city or county which knowingly issues a permit that grants an exemption pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section **2621.7** that does not adhere to the requirements of paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of Section **2621.7**, may be liable for earthquake-related injuries or deaths caused by its failure to so adhere.

**2621.9.** (a) A person who is acting as an agent for a transferor of real property that is located within a delineated earthquake fault zone, 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 delineated earthquake fault zone.

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

(1) The transferor, or the transferor's agent, has actual knowledge that the property is within a delineated earthquake fault 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 delineated earthquake fault 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 shall apply.

(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.

2622. (a) In order to assist cities and counties in their planning, zoning, and building-regulation functions, the State Geologist shall delineate, by December 31, 1973, appropriately wide earthquake fault zones to encompass all potentially and recently active traces of the San Andreas, Calaveras, Hayward, and San Jacinto Faults, and such other faults, or segments thereof, as the State Geologist determines to be sufficiently active and well-defined as to constitute a potential hazard to structures from surface faulting or fault creep. The earthquake fault zones shall ordinarily be one-quarter mile or less in width, except in circumstances which may require the State Geologist to designate a wider zone.

(b) Pursuant to this section, the State Geologist shall compile maps delineating the earthquake fault zones and shall submit those maps to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies, not later than December 31, 1973, for review and comment. Concerned jurisdictions and agencies shall submit all comments to the State Mining and Geology Board for review and consideration within 90 days. Within 90 days of that review, the State Geologist shall provide copies of the official maps to concerned state agencies and to each city or county having jurisdiction over lands lying within that zone.

(c) The State Geologist shall continually review new geologic and seismic data and shall revise the earthquake fault zones or delineate additional earthquake fault zones when warranted by new information. The State Geologist shall submit all revised maps and additional maps to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their review and comment. Concerned jurisdictions and agencies shall submit all comments to the State Mining and Geology Board for review and consideration within 90 days. Within 90 days of that review, the State Geologist shall provide copies of the revised and additional official maps to concerned state agencies and to each city or county having jurisdiction over lands lying within the earthquake fault zone.

(d) 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 offices of the county recorder, county assessor, and county planning commission, identifying the location of the map and the effective date of the notice.

2623. (a) The approval of a project by a city or county shall be in accordance with policies and criteria established by the State Mining and Geology Board and the findings of the State Geologist. In the development of those policies and criteria, the State Mining and Geology Board shall seek the comment and advice of affected cities, counties, and state agencies. Cities and counties shall require,

prior to the approval of a project, a geologic report defining and delineating any hazard of surface fault rupture. If the city or county finds that no undue hazard of that kind exists, the geologic report on the hazard may be waived, with the approval of the State Geologist.

(b) After a report has been approved or a waiver granted, subsequent geologic reports shall not be required, provided that new geologic data warranting further investigations is not recorded.

(c) The preparation of geologic reports that are required pursuant to this section for multiple projects may be undertaken by a geologic hazard abatement district.

2624. Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter, cities and counties may do any of the following:

(1) Establish policies and criteria which are stricter than those established by this chapter.

(2) Impose and collect fees in addition to those required under this chapter.

(3) Determine not to grant exemptions authorized under this chapter.

2625. (a) Each applicant for approval of a project may be charged a reasonable fee by the city or county having jurisdiction over the project.

(b) Such fees shall be set in an amount sufficient to meet, but not to exceed, the costs to the city or county of administering and complying with the provisions of this chapter.

(c) The geologic report required by Section 2623 shall be in sufficient detail to meet the criteria and policies established by the State Mining and Geology Board for individual parcels of land.

2630. In carrying out the provisions of this chapter, the State Geologist and the board shall be advised by the Seismic Safety Commission.