



Structural Engineers Association of California Seismology & Standards Committee

March 13, 2010

Mr. Williston L. Warren IV
President
Structural Engineers Association of California
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 755
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: California Residence Code CRC

Dear Bill

The proposed 2009 California Residential Code (CRC) Section R301.1.3.2 requires construction documents to be "approved and stamped by a CA licensed architect or engineer for all dwellings of wood frame construction more than two stories and basement in height". This is consistent with the California Business and Professions Code sections that limit unlicensed individuals in preparing construction documents.

In contrast, some local jurisdictions have historically adopted a one story limit for non-engineered construction. In particular, the Los Angeles Regional Uniform Code Program has adopted such an amendment since its inception. The rationale for requiring engineering for dwellings more than one story in height is simply to ensure better performance for these structures. Engineered designs have exhibited superior performance in resisting gravity loads but particularly so in resisting lateral loads such as wind and earthquake loading. Given the high seismicity of much of California and the possibility of high wind loading in many parts, the requirement for engineered construction is of particular importance towards ensuring safe and better performing structures. Many engineers believe the prescriptive requirements applicable to non-engineered construction may be inappropriate for two story construction in such an environment.

In light of the above the SEAOC Seismology Committee supports efforts taken by local jurisdictions to require an engineered design for wood frame dwellings more than one story and a basement in height, in areas designated as Seismic Design Category D, E, or F." We urge and request that the Structural Engineers Association of California support these efforts on behalf of the entire Association.

Sincerely

SEAOC Seismology Committee

Mehran Pourzanjani S.E.
Chair –SEAOC Seismology Committee

CC
Mr. Michael Cochran- President of SEAOSC