

State of California
Seismic Safety Commission

Item XIII-1

Memo

To: Seismic Safety Commissioners

From: Henry Reyes, Staff Structural Engineer
Seismic Safety Commission
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Date: April 25, 2012

Subject: Coordinated Planning and Preparedness for Fires
Following Major Earthquakes – Commission Research-
Funded Project

Background

On November 10, 2011 the Commission voted to provide funding for \$49,000 from the California Research and Assistance fund to the Pacific Earthquake Engineering Research Center (PEER) on the above subject project to follow-up on activities recommended on the Fire Following Earthquake Report. This report entitled: *Water Supply in regard to Fire Following Earthquake* was approved by the Commission on July 14, 2011 and submitted to the Commission on November 10, 2011.

The report found (a) Most larger urban fire and water departments are ill informed as to the specifics of their earthquake risk; (b) Water department system vulnerabilities is not well understood by fire departments, although water and fire departments both generally believe most municipal water supply systems are unreliable in a major earthquake; and (c) While some water departments and fire departments have vigorously addressed this issue, many have not.

The purpose of the project is to cooperate with key urban fire and water departments in California, in order to encourage coordinated planning and preparedness for fires following major earthquakes. Cooperation will be fostered via preparation of 'white papers' on the issues.

Progress Update

PEER started work on the project on January 1, 2012. Conducting the study for PEER is Dr. Charles Scawthorn, a visiting scholar at PEER, as the lead researcher. End date is December 31, 2012.

Dr. Scawthorn will present a progress update on the project.