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MASONRY FIREPLACES AND CHIMNEYS

Engineering Calculations and Details Required

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Numerous recent earthquakes have repeatedly emphasized that fireplaces and chimneys constructed of masonry pose a hazard. Chimneys, both reinforced and unreinforced, have cracked at the roof line and in many instances have fallen. It appears that the prescriptive construction standards set forth in the Uniform Building Code are not adequate for Seismic Zone No. 4 (which is the zone for most of Southern California). For this reason, **engineering calculations and details prepared by a licensed architect or civil or structural engineer will now be required for construction of masonry or concrete fireplaces and chimneys. This same requirement shall be applicable to the repair of any fireplace or chimney which has been damaged.**

The following requirement is quoted from new regulations adopted by the City of Los Angeles and will be applied in Monrovia.

"The masonry and concrete chimney shall be tied to a structural element of the building capable of providing lateral resistance for the horizontal forces specified in Section 2336 of the U.B.C. The anchorage of the ties to the resisting structural element shall be designed for the loads specified in Section 2336 of the U.B.C."

The City of Monrovia has contacted both the Masonry Institute of America and the Concrete Masonry Association of California & Nevada in order to determine what new information they may be developing in response to L.A. City's new requirements. This information, if and when it becomes available, will be provided as a handout by the City of Monrovia.

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