

SEISMIC RETROFIT TRAINING

“LEGAL PERSPECTIVES”

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● Use Specified Nails

A contractor should review the contract documents carefully and provide the proper nail size for each location specified in the plans. The contractor should not use nails other than those specified, without checking with an engineer and/or the local building department. If nails other than common nails are used, the connections will usually not satisfy strength requirements and will be considered to be below the applicable standard of care in many instances. The contractor should not use nails with clipped heads or apply coating to fasteners prior to installation, as those conditions can reduce the nail's ability to resist pull out.

Contractors should not substitute screws and staples for nails, unless an engineer has specified a screw or staple type fastener, or the substitution has been reviewed and approved by an engineer.

If the plans call for use of a ten-penny common nail, then contractor should put those in and not an eight-penny box nail. There is a substantial "strength" difference between ten-penny common and eight-penny box nails (63 lbs. vs. 94 lbs.). See the chart in the Appendix of this manual for different nail sizes.

● Nailing Patterns

If the contractor does not follow the nailing directions set forth in the plans, he/ she will reduce the capacity of the wall and expose the contractor to future liability if the wall fails.

● Nailing Patterns And The Liability Revolution

It must be remembered that a substantial contributor to the liability revolution in California has been the failure of contractors to pay attention to the nailing pattern and size requirements set forth in the construction plans and local codes. Contractors are held to performing at least the code standard of care in their work, and must be sure that the framing pattern requirements stated in the local codes and the relevant project plans and specifications are followed in the construction of seismic retrofit projects.

A contractor should not substitute hardware from a manufacturer that has not been approved by the local building official and/or engineer.