

# Requirement to secure unreinforced masonry parapets and facades

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## Building Controls Update 209

On 28 February 2017 the government introduced a new requirement to secure unreinforced masonry (URM) parapets and facades on buildings in certain areas of Wellington City, Hutt City, Marlborough District and Hurunui District Councils.

Following the Hurunui/Kaikōura earthquakes in November 2016, GNS Science has advised there is an increased risk of further earthquakes occurring in the next 12 months in areas that include Wellington, Lower Hutt City, Marlborough and Hurunui.

Owners of URM buildings in those areas will be notified by their council and are required to secure the street-facing parapets and facades on their buildings within 12 months of the date of the notice. The parapets and facades must be secured within this time frame to reduce the risk of falling masonry.

In recognition of the public and private benefits from securing unreinforced masonry parapets and facades, the government and affected councils have established the Unreinforced Masonry Buildings Securing Fund (approximately \$4.5 million) to support building owners in areas of increased risk of further earthquakes in the next 12 months to meet the requirements.

The fund will cover up to half of the design and construction work associated with securing parapets and facades, up to a maximum contribution of \$15,000 to secure a URM facade, and up to \$10,000 to secure a URM parapet.

Buildings with street-facing URM parapets and facades on busy thoroughfares present significant risks to life safety due to their vulnerability in an earthquake event. Securing URM parapets and facades is a cost-effective way to reduce risks to life safety and increase public confidence in the event of further aftershocks or earthquakes.

[Securing unreinforced masonry building parapets and facades \(https://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/unreinforced-masonry/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/unreinforced-masonry/) has further information.

[Questions and Answers, including the list of affected streets \(https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/building/investigations-and-reviews-for-safer-buildings/securing-unreinforced-masonry-building-parapets-and-facades\)](https://www.mbie.govt.nz/building-and-energy/building/investigations-and-reviews-for-safer-buildings/securing-unreinforced-masonry-building-parapets-and-facades), are available on the MBIE Corporate website.

Read the Minister's announcement on the [Parliament website \(https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/parapets-facades-be-secured-38-streets\)](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/parapets-facades-be-secured-38-streets)

