

New geotechnical planning and engineering resource published

Posted: 26 September 2017

Building Controls Update 222

On 26 September 2017 MBIE and the Ministry for the Environment published Planning and engineering guidance for potentially liquefaction-prone land.

This guidance will support local authorities and utility owners to make decisions that are based on sound engineering and science, and are legally robust. The consistent planning approach will make it easier for councils to prepare Resource Management Act policies and plans, and to process resource and building consent applications. This will improve investment certainty for developers and property owners. The guidance will assist all parties associated with the use and development of land in potentially liquefaction-prone areas.

A number of significant liquefaction events have occurred in recent years. Land use planning, together with resilient building and infrastructure design that recognises the risks of liquefaction and guides development, has the potential to reduce the consequences of future events.

Climate change, alongside pressure to develop either marginal land or intensify development in potentially liquefaction-prone areas, is increasing the need for local authorities and building infrastructure owners to better understand and manage these risks.

This guidance is being issued for public comment. Planners and engineers are encouraged to make use of these documents and return comments to engineering@mbie.govt.nz (<https://www.building.govt.nz/mailto:engineering@mbie.govt.nz>) within six months for consideration by the editorial committee. Comments are also welcome from others working in earthquake engineering or land use planning.

For many local authorities, this is a new approach and there may be uncertainty around implementation. The New Zealand Planning Institute and the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand will together run a series of workshops later this year to assist those looking to apply the guidance.

[Planning and engineering guidance for potentially liquefaction-prone land \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/planning-engineering-liquefaction-land/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/planning-engineering-liquefaction-land/)

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