

What's the process?

The earthquake-prone building process can be summarised in five steps:

- 1 Identification:**
The Council will identify buildings that are potentially earthquake-prone and notify owners.
- 2 Assessment:**
Owners of potentially earthquake-prone buildings will then provide more information about their building to the Council. The Council will then confirm whether the building is earthquake-prone or not.
- 3 Notification:**
Owners of earthquake-prone buildings will receive confirmation from the Council and will be issued an earthquake-prone building notice with a deadline to strengthen or demolish. The time frame for most buildings in Hamilton is 25 years, however, buildings that have been identified as priority buildings have 12.5 years.
- 4 Seismic work:**
Owners of earthquake-prone buildings will then carry out seismic work to ensure that their building is no longer earthquake-prone. Fixing an earthquake-prone building involves seismic work. This normally involves strengthening, demolishing, or partially demolishing the building.
- 5 Removal of the notice:**
The owners will notify the Council once seismic work has been completed and a code compliance certificate has been issued. The Council will then review the work and inform the building owner that the building is no longer considered earthquake prone. The notice can then be removed from the building.

This is where we are now

For more information on the national process: [mbie.govt.nz](https://www.mbie.govt.nz)
For Hamilton information email building@hcc.govt.nz
or our webpage [hamilton.govt.nz/epb](https://www.hamilton.govt.nz/epb)

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A guide to identification and management of Earthquake Prone Buildings (EPB)

A national system led by MBIE ensures the way our buildings are managed for future earthquakes is consistent across the country.

In recent years Hamilton City Council has been working with owners of buildings within the city identified as earthquake prone buildings (EPB) or potentially earthquake prone. Hamilton is classed as a medium risk zone for earthquakes, so other areas of the country rated as higher risk had earlier deadlines to work through this process.

Eventually all EPBs in New Zealand will be registered on a national database.

Buildings are regarded as earthquake-prone if they are assessed as being less than one-third of the strength required for a new build in the same location in a moderate earthquake. The rating is determined by a building's weakest element. This means if one area of the building (whether used or not) is rated as below standard, this rating applies to the whole building until the area is strengthened or removed.

EPBs have been identified based on a priority level (this could be because of the location of the building on a priority route or because of the type or use of the building). Building owners have been advised of the stages in the process. From the end of October 2022 notices detailing EPB ratings and other information will be attached to around 200 buildings in Hamilton, including 13 owned by Council. These buildings will also be registered on the national database.

The rating does not mean the building is unsafe or cannot be used, it means it will not perform as well as a new building in a moderate earthquake. MBIE issued guidance in July 2022, (latest information) that it is not necessary to stop using a building on the basis of its %NBS rating.

Owners of buildings in Hamilton have between 12 and a half and 25 years to do the work.

Council has a dual role in the process - as a regulatory body issuing the EPB notices, and as a building owner of properties listed as EPB.

Information for people using buildings identified as EPB

A national system manages identification of earthquake prone buildings in New Zealand. Buildings deemed below 34% of the New Building Standard (NBS) are classified as earthquake prone. The rating does not mean a building is unsafe or cannot be used, it means it won't perform as well as a new building on the same site in a moderate earthquake.

What's the status of Hamilton's buildings?

There are around 200 buildings in Hamilton identified as earthquake prone based on their assessments against the New Build Standard. This is much fewer than in some other cities. Council owns 13 of these buildings, some of which are unused. The ones being used will be upgraded in line with MBIE requirements. Council is planning seismic strengthening at the same time as scheduled.

Are these buildings being used?

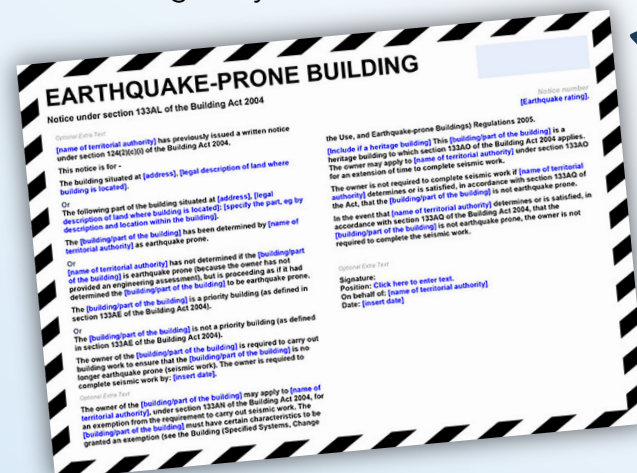
As is the case throughout the country, many EPBs are used or accessed by the public. Building owners will make their own decisions on when to schedule any works. As a property owner, Council is working to plan any remedial works to minimise disruption to staff and visitors. To meet MBIE requirements, Hamilton building owners have between 12.5 and 25 years to complete the works, depending on the building, but we'll be scheduling some earlier than that to align with planned upgrades.

Are the buildings safe?

The seismic assessment doesn't mean the building is unsafe - it just lets us know what works are needed to meet the standards. The ratings are also based on the weakest part of a building - one aspect of the building may need upgrading, while other parts of the structure are fine, but until the works are completed the lower rating applies to the whole building. The latest MBIE guidance is clear that buildings with a low NBS rating can still be used while upgrades are planned. The assessment is a way to identify what needs to be done to plan, fund and undertake works. There are separate processes to determine building safety.

How do I know if a building is an EPB?

Part of the national process includes placing placards on identified buildings. Council will supply these to owners of EPBs in Hamilton from October 2022. Placards must be displayed in a prominent place at all main entrances. Eventually, all EPBs in New Zealand will be registered on a national database managed by MBIE.



Placards will be supplied to EPB property owners from October. There are different types of placard, this example shows a notice with a white and black striped border for a buildings with a rating of 20% to less than 34%.

Information for building owners

Under the Building Act 2004 Council must identify potentially earthquake-prone buildings (or parts of buildings) by applying the Earthquake-prone Building Methodology in the Hamilton City Council region.

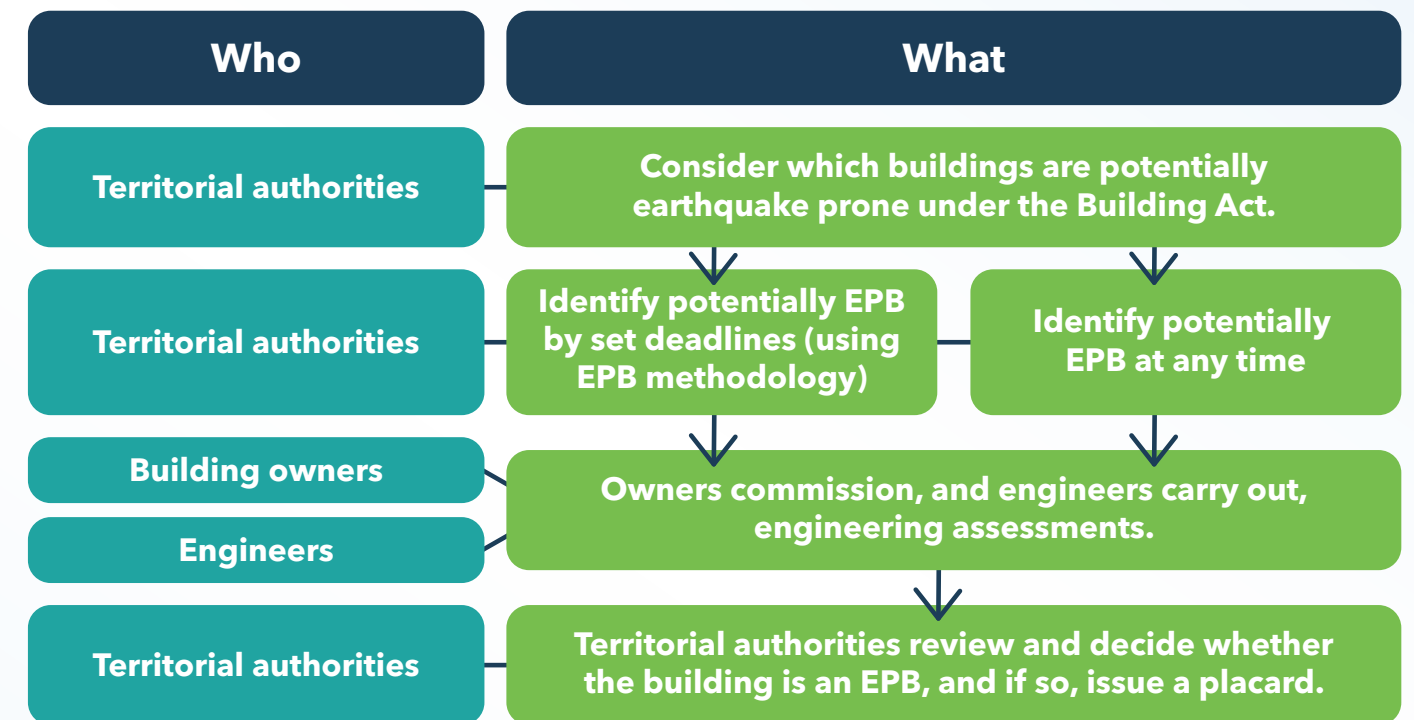
In July 2022 the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment issued updated guidance around how the New Building Standard (NBS) should be used and clarified there is no legal requirement to close a building based solely on a low NBS rating.

Under the Earthquake-prone Building System, buildings with an NBS rating of less than 34% are determined to be earthquake-prone and building owners are required to remediate their building within a specific timeframe. In Hamilton this is up to 25 years, or 12.5 years for priority buildings. Buildings may continue to be occupied during this time.

Council has been working with building owners in recent years and reminder notices and updates were circulated in September 2022. Building owners have been advised if their building has been identified as potentially earthquake prone or confirmed as earthquake prone. Building owners with information that could change this assessment have been asked to provide this to Council.

Part of the national process includes placing placards on identified buildings. These will be supplied to owners of EPBs from October 2022 and must be displayed in a prominent place at all main entrances. Council requests these property owners advise any tenants in advance.

Who does what when managing earthquake-prone buildings



For more information on the national process: mbie.govt.nz
 For Hamilton information email building@hcc.govt.nz
 or our webpage hamilton.govt.nz/epb