

preparedness in our hometowns, with a willingness to speak up in a clear and understandable manner. We need to watch out for excessive conservatism in our areas of expertise and avoid unnecessary concerns about liability. We need to be politically active; such activism allows us to be a resource for expert information in our area of expertise, and provides an openness to the public about how our issues affect local communities.

As the leaders of professional organizations, we need to advance proactively the state of the art and the state of the practice in a manner consistent with the other disciplines of the earthquake profession. We each need to reach out to the others and participate in their discussions, share our advancements, and seek refinements to the common-voice messages. We need to teach the basics at our annual state-of-the-art conferences to educate those who are just joining in. We need to advocate public policy in our fields of expertise with a constant eye toward advocating for the other earthquake professions and being consistent with the common-voice messages.

We can all be proud of what has been accomplished in the past 100 years. We all know that there is much to be done and that the competition for resources in this highly complex and ever-“flattening” world is fierce. As earthquake professionals, choosing to work together, we can accelerate the achievement of seismic safety worldwide.

News of the Profession

Rapid Visual Screening Program in Oregon

In 2005, Oregon Senate Bill 2 directed Oregon's Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) to develop an assessment of the vulnerability of state facilities to

seismic hazards. To accomplish this, four surveying teams are conducting rapid visual screening (RVS) of public schools and emergency facilities in Oregon. The teams will collect field data of K-12 public school buildings and community college buildings that have a capacity of 250 or more persons, hospital buildings with acute inpatient care facilities, fire stations, police stations, sheriffs' offices, and other law enforcement agency buildings.

Since August 2005, DOGAMI has been determining the location of each facility, developing a spatial and tabular database to manage information including RVS results, and preparing for this summer's field effort. The team leaders are Bill Burns of DOGAMI, Carol Hasenberg of Portland State University, Tom Miller of Oregon State University, and Christine Theodoropoulos of the University of Oregon.

Each surveyor will be using the latest technology, including computer tablets with mounted digital cameras and GPS units. They are provided site location maps and air photographs of each facility to assist with their RVS work. Their RVS data will be uploaded to a master database located at the DOGAMI headquarters, where data will be viewed and analyzed.

The final database of the statewide needs assessment will consist of the RVS, photographs, information on the quality of building additions, and the ranking of the RVS results into risk categories. The results will be posted on a publicly accessible web site.

Senate Bill 2 provided the first step in a pre-disaster mitigation strategy that is further defined in Senate Bills 3, 4, and 5. Senate Bill 3 directs the Oregon Emergency Management office to create a grant program for local communities. Senate Bills 4 and 5 direct the state treasurer to issue voter-approved bonds. Altogether, \$1.2 billion will be appropriated to improve seismic safety statewide.

For more information, click on www.oregongeology.com/sub/projects/rvs.htm.

Publications

NIST Hurricane Report

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) recently issued a report on its broad-based reconnaissance on the performance of a variety of physical structures during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that hit the Gulf states last year. The report makes 23 recommendations for specific improvements in the way that buildings, physical infrastructure (such as flood protection systems, bridges, utilities, and industrial facilities), and residential structures are designed, constructed, maintained, and operated in hurricane-prone regions across the United States—not just in the states affected by the two hurricanes.

The NIST report, *Performance of Physical Structures in Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita: A Reconnaissance Report* (NIST Technical Note 1476), is available online at <http://www.bfrl.nist.gov>. The web site also contains links to a press release, FAQs, the executive summary of the report, and a comprehensive set of briefing slides.

NIST has established a web site to provide information on all its building and fire safety investigations. The web site (<http://www.bfrl.nist.gov/investigations>) provides links to information on the World Trade Center investigation, NIST investigations conducted under the National Construction Safety Team Act, and investigations conducted under other NIST authorities.

