

EARTHEN BUILDINGS AND EARTHQUAKES

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ABSTRACT

The generally poor performance of earthen buildings in earthquakes is addressed but the position is taken that much of this damage could be prevented while still using, to a large extent, local materials and construction practices. Some simple requirements would be essential but they cannot be too drastic or increase the cost significantly. They do have to bring to bear reasonable compliance with certain laws of nature and of earthquake engineering. Models or prototype structures could be used for educational purposes. The major contributors to damage and collapse are listed as well as the major ways to prevent collapse. The challenge is great -- the reward is hundreds of thousands of lives in future decades.