



Upgrade brick masonry chimneys

Why

- ▶ Prevents damage during earthquakes when chimneys and fireplaces can move differently from the house itself due to their heavy, rigid, and brittle nature.

How

- ▶ Replace the firebox and chimney with light-frame construction above the top of the foundation. Remove the fireplace and mantel and replace them with a factory-built fireplace unit.
- ▶ Consult an experienced, licensed retrofit contractor or engineer for assistance.

How to Identify

- ▶ Look for metal straps, braces, or steel brackets anchoring the chimney to the roof or attic framing to determine if your chimney is braced for earthquakes.
- ▶ Check for added plywood sheathing, lateral supports, or reinforcing steel rods inside the chimney.
- ▶ Check for retrofit records, inspection reports, and permits.