



US Resiliency Council

Benefits of the USRC Verified Rating

A USRC Rating is used to understand the expected performance of the building in which you live, work or invest. It considers the performance of a building's structure; its mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, and architectural components such as cladding, windows, partitions, and ceilings. The performance of these elements affects occupant safety, the cost and time to carry out necessary repairs, and when you can begin using the building following an earthquake.

A Verified Rating is used for promotional, marketing, and publicity purposes. It assigns one to five stars for three performance measures:

- **SAFETY**
- **DAMAGE (REPAIR COST) AND**
- **RECOVERY (TIME TO REGAIN BASIC FUNCTION).**

A Verified rating also has the following features:

- *Performed by a certified professional*
- *Each rating is technically reviewed*
- *Transparent – use of national standards*
- *Credible – designed to prevent manipulation*
- *Easy for the lay person to understand*

For a new building, a seismic design that results in a four or five star USRC rating may add 1 to 10 percent to construction costs, or about as much as a typical contingency budget.

Building codes are minimum standards established to prevent the likelihood of deadly collapse in a maximum considered earthquake. The Codes do not consider that there can be substantial damage in many structures rendering them unfit for occupancy or use. The USRC rating system allows an owner to specify the desired level of performance of their building rather than design to the minimum level prescribed by the building code.



The USRC provides two types of seismic ratings:

A USRC Transaction Rating is used for transactional due diligence that accommodates both the schedule and cost demands of the leasing, sales, finance, and insurance markets for commercial real estate.

A USRC Verified Rating is used for promotional, marketing, and publicity purposes. A USRC Verified Rating includes a technical review of each building evaluation prior to its issuance.

A USRC Rating Provides Confidence

The USRC system provides rating users with greater confidence in a building performance evaluation by delivering:

- **Consistency** – Only certified engineers are able to submit applications for a USRC Rating.
- **Credibility** – Rating submissions undergo a technical audit by certified reviewers.
- **Value** – Users receive actionable information about building safety, repair cost, and time to regain function that is useful for recovery planning and long term strategic planning.



Benefits of using a USRC Rating

- **Owners** use USRC Ratings to better understand and manage risks. Properties achieving a high USRC Rating can command higher market values, potentially increasing leasing rates and transaction efficiency.
- **Lenders and Insurers** use USRC Ratings to provide building performance information as part of real estate transactions, lending decisions, and in the selection of insurance products.
- **Tenants** value the USRC Rating as it relates to both safety and recovery time following a major event, as this information can be critical in making decisions about which buildings to lease.
- **Property Buyers** use USRC Ratings as a key metric in determining the long term risk and return on investment of a real estate purchase.
- **Governments and Institutions** use USRC Ratings to identify safe buildings and make long-term strategic plans for reducing reconstruction costs and recovery time following a major disaster.
- **Architects** use the USRC Rating as an integral part of resilient design strategies for their clients.

Los Angeles, the second largest city in the United States, is implementing a voluntary rating program, utilizing the USRC Rating System.

Value of a USRC Rating

- **Better understanding** of a building's expected performance during a disaster leads to better risk management.
- **Increased resilience to natural hazards** will increase a building's desirability among owners, tenants, lenders, and insurance companies. A high USRC Rating documents a building's resilience.
- **A high level of credibility** is achieved by using only Certified Raters and Reviewers to submit and review ratings. Certification requires professional registration and experience in design and evaluation of buildings subject to natural hazards.
- **A single financial standard.** A USRC Rating provides lenders, buyers, and tenants information they can rely on for real estate and financial due diligence transactions.
- **Long term risk, resilience planning, and prioritization** for governments, universities, hospitals and other institutional owners can be based on the use of USRC Ratings.

In Tokyo, office buildings with seismic performance on par with a USRC five-star rating command 40% higher lease rates compared to buildings with lower seismic performance.

The USRC Promotes Resiliency

Modern building codes focus only on safety, leaving recovery planning for after a disaster. The USRC Rating System delivers credible information on the expected safety, damage and recovery of the buildings in which we live and work.



This knowledge is essential to pre-disaster planning for both new construction and the existing built environment in order to reduce the immediate and long-term impact of a disaster.

For more information, visit us at:

www.usrc.org