What is a retrofit?

A retrofit, sometimes called a seismic retrofit, involves strengthening a house to make it more resistant to earthquakes.

Seismic retrofits — why should Californians care?

California has two-thirds of the nation’s earthquake risk.
- Some 15,700 known faults crisscross the state, and more than 500 are considered active.
- Most Californians live within 30 miles of an active fault.
- There is a more than 99% chance of one or more magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquakes striking California.

Certain structures that lack proper retrofitting (adequate bolting and bracing) are more vulnerable to earthquake damage.

Why should owners of older houses with crawl spaces consider a seismic retrofit?

Houses built before 1980 on raised foundations are vulnerable to earthquake damage. Older houses are often not bolted to their foundations and may lack bracing on the wood framed walls enclosing the crawl space. Houses without adequate bolting and bracing are prone to sliding or toppling off their foundation during an earthquake. This type of serious damage can be prevented with proper seismic retrofit of the crawl space.
What are reasons to complete a seismic retrofit?

**Reason 1: Increase safety**
Properly retrofitted houses are made stronger against earthquake shaking and damage. This means your house is safer, and you’ve reduced the chance of injury or even death in a devastating earthquake.

**Reason 2: Financially protect your investment**
You have invested a lot of time and money into your older house. Without a seismic retrofit, the repair costs you’d face after a damaging earthquake could be very costly. Think of it this way: it’s a lot cheaper to retrofit your house now than it is to repair it after an earthquake.

**Reason 3: Make sure you have a place to live**
If you have not seismically retrofitted your house and an earthquake damages it, it could take years to repair, and you may have to take out a loan to make repairs. Also, keep in mind that people often have to move out of their home during repairs, and rental costs typically go up in affected areas following a major disaster. That means you could be paying repair costs, rental costs, and your mortgage—all at the same time!

**Are there resources to help with a seismic retrofit?**
If you are a homeowner in an eligible ZIP Code, you may be eligible for a grant of up to $3,000 from the Earthquake Brace + Bolt program or—if you’re a California Earthquake Authority (CEA) policyholder and meet eligibility requirements—from the CEA Brace + Bolt program. CEA policyholders with a verified seismic retrofit also may receive up to 25% off their insurance policy premium.

**Where can I learn more?**
Learn more about earthquake risk and preparedness at EarthquakeAuthority.com and learn more about seismic retrofitting and grant eligibility at EarthquakeBraceBolt.com and CEABraceBolt.com.