



FEMA

Colton Schools Seismic Mitigation School Retrofit Program

San Bernardino County, CA - The Colton Unified School District, in San Bernardino County, Calif., combines traditional and year-round schedules, thereby having a high level of occupancy and use of facilities. Year-round life safety is a major focus of the school district's preparedness and mitigation program.

The county was seriously affected by the Landers and Big Bear earthquakes, which struck the area one hour apart in 1992. Both earthquakes caused damage to building and interrupted school schedules.

These events -- plus the realization that there is ongoing potential for hazards and damage to facilities in the seismically active area (near the San Andreas fault) -- prompted the county's Office of Education to apply for a hazard mitigation grant from FEMA. Funds are for non-structural mitigation for all school districts in the county.

The Colton Unified School District's consultant recommended mitigation solutions that would exceed life-safety standards. The first non-structural mitigation projects were done in kitchens of three schools where stoves, freezers and refrigerators were secured to prevent tipping during earthquakes. Mitigation plans also called for installation of computer hold-downs, and securing mobile carts and filing cabinets.

Funds for this project were made available from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and were obtained by the San Bernardino County Office of Education for the Colton school district's non-structural mitigation effort. Non-structural retrofit projects have been demonstrated to be cost-effective mitigation. For the District's project, the benefit/cost analysis shows a ratio of savings from future events to the cost of mitigation of at least one-to-one.

The position of the county schools office and Colton school district is that hazards can and do repeat themselves, that non-structural mitigation done to lessen effects of these hazards can greatly reduce damage and life-threatening affects of hazards, and that non-structural mitigation can last for the life of facilities.



San Bernardino County, California



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public

Cost:

\$200,000.00 (Estimated)

Primary Activity/Project:

Retrofitting, Non-structural

Primary Funding:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)