

RECOMMENDED BUILDING STANDARDS FOR JOYABAJ

I. Background

The purpose of the following building standards for the pueblo of Joyabaj is to provide a guide for the people when they build a formal house, to ensure that they build homes which will be safe for their families and which will not endanger the homes or lives of their neighbors.

These standards are what are known as "performance standards". This means that any type of house may be built, any size of house may be built, and any material can be used to build the house, so long as the final structure which is built is earthquake resistant, and so long as it does not endanger the lives or property of neighbors or passersby.

II. Definitions

- A. Earthquake resistant: A house is deemed to be earthquake resistant if it incorporates at least 75% of the earthquake resistant building principles and has a lightweight roof. Earthquake resistant does not mean that the house is earthquake-proof; it means that the house will suffer only limited damage in an earthquake and the occupants will have time to safely evacuate the house during an earthquake.
- B. Lightweight roof: A lightweight roof is defined as a roofing material which weighs less than 1 kilo per square foot. Examples: lamina, ~~para~~, duralita, oja de palma.
- C. L-Shaped house: An L-shaped house is one which is built in the shape of the letter "L", and in which the walls are continuous, not separated by crush sections.
- D. Lightweight walls: Lightweight walls are defined as walls which are either built of a lightweight material (such as wood, block, brick, or adobe de canto) or which do not exceed a height of 2.20 meters measured from the ground, or a combination of both.
- E. Steep slope: A steep slope is a slope which exceeds 60^o, measured in declining numbers of degrees from the vertical (90^o).
- F. General standards: General standards apply to all structures defined in Section III of this document.
- G. Dividing wall: A dividing wall is a solid wall which separates one lot from another, or which is used to subdivide a piece of property.

III. Applicability

These building standards apply to all structures in which people live. They do not apply to commercial structures, industrial buildings, churches, or buildings owned by the city of Joyabaj, the Department of Quiché, or the Government of Guatemala.

IV. General Standards

- A. Siting:
 - 1. No house will be located closer than 1 vara to another structure or to a dividing wall.
 - 2. No house shall be located closer than 10 meters to a steep slope.
 - 3. No house shall be built on a landfill or on the edge of a slope known to be leveled by bulldozing.