

# Better safe than sorry

## SAFETY: Your home can be upgraded for earthquake

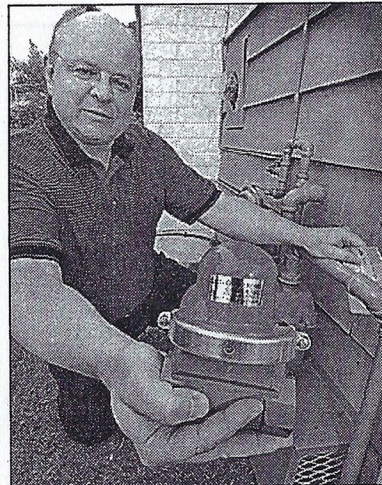
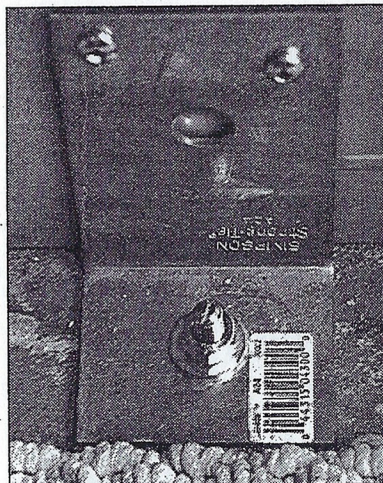
It looks like any other house on this typical Burnaby street.

But inside — and out as well — this Taralawn Drive home has been retrofitted to keep things as safe as possible in the event of an earthquake.

The retrofit was sponsored by the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, a non-profit organization created by Canada's large insurance companies to help educate Canadians about disaster safety.

A major earthquake is inevitable in B.C. — recent reports indicate it could be as strong as the Indonesian quake that devastated much of Asia in December. Although no one can predict when this will happen, homeowners can do a number of things to lessen the impact. "Disaster losses can be greatly reduced if people undertake appropriate measures today," says Paul Kovacs, Executive Director of the ICLR.

The Burnaby home retrofit



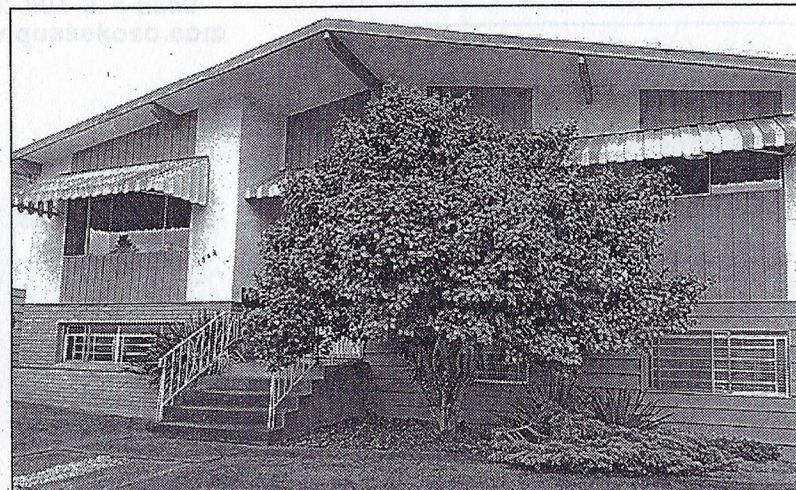
At left, footing that bolts hot-water tank to the floor. At right, Paul Kovacs, Executive Director of the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, with a shut-off valve for outside of the house.

involves:

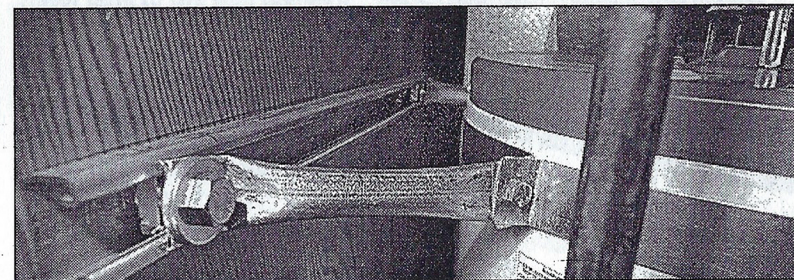
- Anchoring cabinets, office equipment and bedroom furniture
- Bracing the media cabinet, television and refrigerator with appliance straps
- Securing the washing machine with armoured supply hoses
- Strapping the furnace and hot-water heater
- Tethering chandeliers with fish-

ing lines

- Securing pictures to the walls with quake wax
  - Applying safety UV film to the windows
  - Installing a gas shut-off valve at the gas meter outside the house and encasing the meter in a cage to protect it from the close proximity of the brick chimney.
- This is the third year that ICLR has



Burnaby home retrofitted to be safer with such tasks as bolting the hot-water tank to the wall (below). WAYNE LEIDENFROST PHOTOS — THE PROVINCE



retrofitted an existing home as part of Emergency Preparedness Week. In 2003, a home in London, Ont., was made more resilient to tornadoes and last year a Halifax home was fortified to better withstand damage from hurricanes.

For further information on retro-

fitting your home, check at [www.iclr.org](http://www.iclr.org). Gas shut-off valves are available through QuakeKoko Canada Inc., (604-274-5550). Krasicki & Ward, 2500-900 W. 8th Ave., Vancouver, (604-739-9455) carries some fastening systems.

— Staff reporter