

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY



Evan Yee Daily News

The Radisson Hotel in Sherman Oaks, severely damaged in the Northridge Earthquake, was to reopen today following \$8 million in repairs.

Reinforced Radisson to reopen today

By Tony Knight
Daily News Staff Writer

The Radisson Hotel in Sherman Oaks, one of the most badly damaged high-rise buildings in the Northridge Earthquake, was scheduled to reopen today after a \$8 million seismic retrofit and renovation project.

Built in 1968 of nonductile — or inflexible — concrete, the 13-story Ventura Boulevard hotel was red-tagged after last year's earthquake with 23 percent of its supporting concrete columns shattered or badly damaged, according to city records.

All of the columns were replaced and 110 steel reinforced shear

walls were installed so the building could withstand shaking even stronger than the Jan. 17, 1994, temblor, hotel officials said.

"You have a lot of rigidity in this building that you didn't have before," said Perry Raanan, president of Construction Technologies Consultants, Inc. of Los Angeles, which did the structural retrofit.

In addition to the structural reinforcement, the entire hotel was renovated with new carpets, wall-paper, fixtures, plumbing and wiring, said Sidney Caplan, one of the partners who owns the hotel.

"It was unbelievable, the damage," Caplan said. "You couldn't see it, but it kept popping up. The earthquake shook the bathtubs and

broke all the connections. We didn't know that at first. Then we discovered we've got 200 bathtubs with the connections broken underneath."

Nonductile concrete buildings like the Radisson are considered the most vulnerable in an earthquake, city officials said.

"Had that earthquake gone on for a few more seconds, I'm sure we would have had more of these buildings collapse," said Tom Sabol of Englekirk and Sabol Consulting Engineers, Inc., who heads up a city committee studying how nonductile concrete buildings performed in the quake.

Similar buildings that did not survive the Northridge Quake

include the Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building in Granada Hills, the Bullock's store at the Northridge Fashion Center and the Barrington Building in West Los Angeles.

About 1,000 nonductile buildings collapsed in the Kobe Earthquake in January, city building officials said.

Building officials are preparing an ordinance that will be brought to the City Council later this year or early next year. If approved, it would require major retrofitting of about 1,000 concrete buildings, said Karl Deppe, assistant chief of the city building bureau.

"We're going to push it," Deppe said.