
James L. Ruhle California Earthquake Collection

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Glendale Library, Arts and Culture. Glendale Central Library History Room

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2021

Descriptive Summary

Title: James L. Ruhle California Earthquake Collection

Dates: 1971

Collection Number: JLR

Creator/Collector: Ruhle, James L.

Extent: 0.21 linear feet, 1 box

Repository: Glendale Library, Arts and Culture. Glendale Central Library History Room
Glendale, California 91205

Abstract: The James L. Ruhle California Earthquake Collection consists of a small set of slides and prints documenting damage to structures and roadways during the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, also known as the Sylmar earthquake. The slides were prepared by geologist and photographer James L. Ruhle who taught in the Geology Department at California State University, Fullerton. This collection of 36 slides may have been replicated in a slide set titled, "San Fernando Earthquake," one of approximately 80 sets of audiovisual teaching aids published by James L. Ruhle and Associates in the 1970s and 1980s.

Language of Material: English

Access

The collection is open for research use.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

James L. Ruhle California Earthquake Collection. Glendale Library, Arts and Culture. Glendale Central Library History Room

Acquisition Information

Unknown

Scope and Content of Collection

The James L. Ruhle California Earthquake Collection consists of 36 numbered color 35 mm slides (plus one duplicate), and 41 color 8 x 10 photographic prints which replicate the slides. The collection also contains a list describing the context and location of each photograph by slide number. The slides document the impact of the 1971 San Fernando earthquake, also known as the Sylmar earthquake, which was most severe in the northeastern section of the San Fernando Valley approximately 28 miles north of Los Angeles, California. The earthquake caused 64 deaths, most from the collapse of a hospital administered by the Veteran's Administration. Other deaths occurred at the Olive View Medical Center which had opened only three weeks earlier. The nearby Van Norman Reservoir lost 30 feet of its upper section, but due to an earlier water release, thousands of lives were spared. The images in this collection document damage to the roofs, chimneys, and foundations of private residences, buckled and uplifted sidewalks, the collapse of the emergency vehicle carport and one wing of Olive View Medical Center, buckled sections and collapsed overpasses of the Golden State and Foothill Freeways, landslides in Lopez, Schwartz, and Grapevine Canyons, and the collapsed upper section of Van Norman Reservoir. Color of the photographic prints is degraded.

Indexing Terms

Earthquakes--California--San Fernando

San Fernando Earthquake, Calif., 1971

Ruhle, James L., 1936-2016

Sylmar (Los Angeles, Calif.)

San Fernando Valley (Calif.)

Los Angeles County (Calif.)

Photographic Materials

[Finding aid with box list](#)