

Professor Warned of Berkeley Lab Slide Risk

Becky O'Malley, Berkeley Daily Planet, 1-17-13

The Berkeley Lab (formerly known as Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) [reports on its website](#) that “consistent rain over the last few months has destabilized the hillside above McMillan Road between Buildings 17 and 71. The hillside continues to inch toward the road, which has been closed as a precaution. A potential landslide warrants the road closure and relocation of Building 46 occupants.”

The site is in Strawberry Canyon, in the hills above the University of California at Berkeley campus, where new Berkeley Lab expansion building projects are now in progress.

The Planet has received a letter from Georgia Wright pointing out that the late Geology Professor Garniss Curtis had warned that building the original laboratory in this area was risky, and that future construction would also be problematical. Wright is the producer of a pair of short videos which focus on Curtis’ analysis.

In her letter, she says that “the recent landslide is evidently on the site of the slide in 1974, a topic in the video ‘*The Fault: Quakes, Slides, and the Lawrence Berkeley Lab.*’

“Prof. Garniss Curtis, who died on December 19, 2011, was interviewed about the geology of the Lab site. He had written the Regents in 2008, warning them not to build on the hill.”