

William Lemessurier essay

[Health & Medicine](#), [Stress](#)



William LeMessurier was the big brain behind the Citicorp building's architecture built in downtown Manhattan in 1977. He innovatively solved the problem of constructing the structure on a land owned by a church by building it above the church. So Citicorp's first floor was nine equivalent floors above ground level and it remained supported by four tall columns placed not at the corners of the building but instead at the center of each side of the building. Satisfying all the New York building code requirements, the Citicorp building was a success.

After a concerned phone call from a student in June 1978 and a further finding which showed that nuts and bolts were used on a joint instead of his recommended choice of welding, LeMessurier's concern over the stability of his new design increased. Even though the building still satisfied the regulations, he decided to investigate fully and resolve these concerns.

LeMessurier's worst fears come true when he found that a mere 40% stress increase in some parts of the building would result in 160% stress increase in some of the joints in the structure putting the whole of the building and the church in significant danger. With the hurricane season not far away, the architect disregarded his personal reputation and other financial issues to do what was right. He came up quickly with a solution to fix the problem and presented it to Citicorp, who immediately supported his plan.

Several million dollars were put into resolving the situation, but the company's prompt and honest approach eventually won them everyone's respect and even a lowered liability insurance rate.