



Media release

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Training sessions help up skill Selwyn's construction industry

Selwyn District Council is delivering a new series of training sessions to help upskill the district's growing building workforce and maintain high building standards.

More than 40 building industry professionals attended a recent training session at the Lincoln Event Centre, which clarified using alternative and acceptable solutions for designing and constructing buildings.

An alternative solution is a design solution which is different to a standard design. It can include a material, component or construction method, like using a different reinforcing steel in a foundation, a timber kitchen bench top instead of formica or granite, or different options for escape route lighting.

This was the third session in a series of training workshops organised by the council's building consent team. The first session in July focused on the online consenting system AlphaOne and the second session in August was about building consent legislation.

Selwyn District Council Building Manager Ian Butler says there has been a significant increase in the number of buildings going up around the district, and employees who enter the building workforce need to be kept up to date on building legislation and Council requirements.

The total number of building consents issued in Selwyn for the year to June 2014 was 2,790, up from 2,390 in the twelve months to June 2013. The number of new dwelling consents rose more sharply – from 1,084 to 1,613.

"With this increased building activity it's important we continue to educate the people doing the work to ensure our building standard remains high in Selwyn for new and existing homeowners. We've found these sessions are a great platform for anyone involved in the construction industry to help network and learn from peers or people from other fields," says Mr Butler.

Andrew Carson from CPS Solar attended the recent session and says it was a great opportunity to engage with the council in an informal setting and discuss the changing needs of families who are building in Selwyn.

"I'm pleased the Selwyn District Council is promoting alternative building and construction. 'Cookie-cutter' housing will not meet the needs of the future so it's refreshing to see community leaders taking a proactive role in promoting this kind of progressive thinking," says Mr Carson.

Chris Salay from Refresh Renovations also attended the session and agrees people often want something that performs better, is more cost effective, or overcomes a specific site

problem, so having the ability to talk to council staff about alternative solutions at the recent workshop was a great service.

“We often notice people in Canterbury want a non-generic approach to building or designing their home, so having the flexibility to talk to the council at these sessions about what options we can offer people is very helpful and something I hope continues in the future.”

The next session for building professionals will be held on Thursday 20 November and will focus on plumbing and drainage requirements at the consent application stage. To register, email billy.charlton@selwyn.govt.nz. For more information, visit www.selwyn.govt.nz/building.

Ends

Photos attached:

*Alan Gemmil and Chris Salay from Refresh Renovations,
Andrew Carson from CPS Solar and civil engineer Alan Stephens.*

For media enquiries please contact:

Allanah Jarman
Selwyn District Council
Phone 03 347 2807
Allanah.jarman@selwyn.govt.nz