



Media Release

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Drive safe on the roads this winter

June marks the official start of winter and this brings an increased risk of rain, fog, ice and snow. In these conditions it is important to slow down and adjust your driving to the conditions.

Winter also reduces visibility with sunrise occurring later in the mornings and sunset occurring earlier in the evening. Many people are on the road driving to or from work in darkness or dim light. Using your vehicles lights is a simple way of increasing visibility and improving safety.

“The way we all drive affects everyone’s safety on the road,” says Selwyn Road Safety Coordinator Ngaire Tinning. “Wet and slippery roads and inappropriate speed for the conditions can be unforgiving of small mistakes, particularly on bends. It’s important to slow down in challenging weather and allow larger following distances on wet roads as it takes longer to stop in these conditions.”

Some Selwyn residents are reporting drivers not using their lights in rain and fog, while others say they have seen cars passing them at speed when they don’t have a clear view of the road ahead.

Statistics from Selwyn crashes between 2012 and 2016 show that in the winter months (June, July and August) there were twice as many accidents in the 6-9am time period as in the summer months (December, January and February). A total of 76 crashes occurred in this morning peak period in winter between 2012 and 2016, with a total of 38 crashes occurring in this time in the summer.

Throughout the winter, the Council’s roading contractors will be monitoring local roads for ice and laying grit when needed. Even when roads are covered with grit, motorists still need drive carefully and reduce their speed.

“Taking a few minutes before you set out in the morning to clear your windscreen, windows and mirrors, and then adjusting your driving for the conditions that day will improve your chances of arriving safely at your destination,” says Mrs Tinning.

Free windscreen cloths and ice scrapers are now available for a limited time from Council libraries and service centres and some rural garages.

Ends

Photo attached: *Snow, ice and poor visibility are some of the challenges associated with winter driving.*

For media enquiries please contact

Allanah Jarman

Selwyn District Council

Phone 03 347 2807

allanah.jarman@selwyn.govt.nz