



Media Release  
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## Get Ready to Get Through Snow

June marks the official start of winter and with winter comes the risk of snow affecting Selwyn.

Snow is common in Selwyn during winter and has the potential to cut off power and telephone services and close roads.

Selwyn's Emergency Manager Officer Ryan O'Rourke says that now that winter is here, it is important for people to ensure their household is well prepared to cope with snow.

"The further away from a main town you live, the better your preparations need to be as you could be housebound for several days until roads can be cleared and power restored. However a large snowstorm could cut power to main towns like Rolleston, Lincoln and the surrounding areas so everyone needs to be ready to cope with that situation."

To prepare your household for snow you can take the following steps:

- have several days' food and bottled drinking water, medication and a first aid kit, a portable battery operated radio, torch, matches, baby food and supplies, cutlery and can opener, and warm clothing, stored in a waterproof container
- have an alternative power source and another way of cooking food if the power fails
- if you have a fireplace, ensure you have several days' supply of firewood or coal available
- keep your vehicle fuel tank near full to avoid potential ice in the tank and fuel lines
- on the farm; plan in advance where livestock can be moved to shelter and ensure there is enough dry feed. Consider how you would supply stock water if the power is off. Most animal deaths in winter storms are from dehydration
- register online to join the Selwyn Gets Ready website at [www.selwyn.getsready.net](http://www.selwyn.getsready.net). The website helps communities to prepare for an emergency by providing information on who needs assistance in an emergency and what skills and resources (like generators and first aid skills) are available in your neighborhood.
- get to know your neighbours and find out whether they may need any assistance, or could help you, in an emergency

If a snow storm hits then:

- listen to your radio, or television, and visit the Council website, [www.selwyn.govt.nz](http://www.selwyn.govt.nz), for weather reports and emergency information
- ensure you drink enough water and watch for signs of frostbite or hypothermia - these include loss of feeling to fingers, toes, ear lobes and the tip of the nose. Symptoms also include uncontrollable shivering, memory loss and exhaustion
- wear several layers of loose fitting, lightweight, warm clothing
- keep rooms well ventilated when using gas or kerosene heaters to avoid a build-up of toxic fumes
- bring pets inside
- move stock to shelter and make sure they are secure if there is no power

- report broken utility lines to Orion
- check on your neighbours and help them out if they need assistance
- avoid driving unless absolutely necessary. If you have to travel take snow chains, sleeping bags, warm clothing and essential emergency items in case you become stuck
- if you are caught in your car or truck in a snowstorm, stay in your vehicle and make yourself visible to rescuers by tying a bright-coloured cloth to your radio aerial or door handle and keep the inside light on.

Ends

Images attached: *A heavy snow fall blankets Darfield in June 2006.*

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