



Media Release

21 September

Selwyn Civil Defence volunteers needed

Selwyn District Council is recruiting more volunteers to build on the district's ability to respond to a Civil Defence emergency.

The Council's Emergency Management Team is hosting a recruitment evening at the Council offices in Rolleston on Tuesday 2 October at 7pm.

Emergency Management Team Leader Ryan O'Rourke says the Council is looking to fill roles in all three of its volunteer Civil Defence teams including the Response Team, Welfare Team and Community Response Team.

"This latest round of volunteer recruitment will build on a strong base of Civil Defence volunteers who live in the district," Mr O'Rourke says.

"We want to increase the number of volunteers to ensure we can manage a long duration event, such as an earthquake generated by the Alpine Fault."

Selwyn response teams

The Selwyn Response Team requires another seven members. The response team volunteers can expect to complete about six months' training in communications, light search and rescue, urban search and rescue awareness, first aid, the coordinated incident management system and skills specific to certain Civil Defence events. There is ongoing training once the team is operational to keep their skills up to date.

"The response team is trained to a national standard. Being part of this team is a huge commitment, as members will be expected to train weekly and during some weekends too," Mr O'Rourke says.

The Selwyn Emergency Welfare Team needs another eight volunteers. The welfare team is a new team trained to open and operate a Civil Defence Centre, providing support to people who have to evacuate their homes in an emergency. The welfare team trains weekly.

"People who are interested in volunteering at our Civil Defence Centres must be physically fit, be able to work under pressure and have empathy for people who are struggling in extremely stressful situations," Mr O'Rourke says.

The Community Response Team needs as many members as possible. Across Selwyn there are more than 30 community teams which are ready to respond in an emergency to support their local area. Community volunteers also provide situational

awareness to the Emergency Operations Centre, and are required to attend one training session per year.

"With the support of Selwyn Civil Defence, these teams are encouraged to support their community and open an emergency centre where the community can gather during an event," Mr O'Rourke says.

People can visit: www.selwyn.govt.nz/civildefence for more information on volunteering for one of the Civil Defence volunteer teams, and to see the kinds of events they may have to respond to. Enquiries can also be emailed to the Selwyn District Council Emergency Management Team: civildefence@selwyn.govt.nz. All volunteers are required to pass Police vetting.