



Media Release
Monday 27 May 2013

Drive Safe this Winter

Winter officially begins on 1 June. Winter brings more challenging driving conditions including rain, fog, ice on the roads and often snow. Daylight hours are also shorter and visibility is often poor during the morning and evening rush hours when many people are on the roads.

Selwyn Road Safety Coordinator Ngaire Tinning says that over winter it's really important for drivers to slow down and adjust their driving to more dangerous conditions.

"Driving behavior plays a big part in safety during winter and on wet, slippery, roads driving too fast can easily lead to a crash, especially on bends."

During the months of June - August from 2008 - 2012 there were a total of 324 crashes on Selwyn roads. Of all the crashes that occurred during winter over the last five years, 54% were due to loss of control on straight roads and bends. 25% of crashes occurred in wet conditions and 18% in icy conditions.

Mrs Tinning says that many Selwyn residents report that they see drivers not using their lights in rain and fog, while others say they have observed cars passing them at speed, including on roads where there is not enough visibility to overtake safely.

This winter, Selwyn roading contractors will be watching many roads during the winter for icy conditions to make them safer for everyone by laying grit. However, Mrs Tinning says that motorists still need to be very careful even if roads are covered with grit, as these roads only have a 40% improvement in skid resistance.

"Winter driving does not have to be dangerous or intimidating," she says. "If you can start your journey five minutes earlier than in normal so that you can travel slower and prepare your vehicle by defrosting it and checking that your tires are in good condition you will have a much safer journey."

Selwyn District Council is providing motorists in the district with free windscreen cloths. These are available from all Council library/service centres. Ice scrapers will also be available from early June from these locations.

For more information, please contact:

Ngaire Tinning
Selwyn District Council
(03) 347 2901
Ngaire.tinning@selwyn.govt.nz