



28 September 2010

## ***Get Ready Week 2010 from 10-16 October***

### **Waikato's 2010 natural hazards highlight value of being prepared**

The Waikato has had a busy year on the natural hazards front.

From tsunami warnings through to drought and high river levels, the fact that the region faces a range of disaster risks has been very clearly illustrated.

Also, the Canterbury earthquake has highlighted the vulnerability all New Zealanders face if there is a big shake in their region.

However, a recent survey for Environment Waikato has shown only eight per cent of Waikato households are fully prepared for a disaster. This means they have an emergency plan for both at home and away, emergency items and water, and they update these items regularly.

During Get Ready Week 2010, which runs from 10-16 October, Waikato Civil Defence Emergency Management Group is calling for regional residents to do more about getting better prepared.

"The Waikato region has a lot of potential for natural hazards including river and stream flooding, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic activity, severe storms, and human pandemic," said Waikato Civil Defence coordinating executive group chairman Langley Cavers.

"If any one of these disasters struck the Waikato, overwhelming demand for emergency services means people could go up to three days before receiving essential items such as water, power and telecommunications. So we need to lift levels of preparedness.

"The fact is disaster can strike at any time and without compassion."

Mr Cavers said each household should prepare an emergency survival kit which will last them up to three days if a disaster struck. This kit should include an adequate supply of food, a means to cook with (such as a gas cooker or BBQ) and water to get a family through the first 72 hours of an emergency, as well as a first aid kit, torches, batteries, and a radio.

Within the Waikato group's region, there are three emergency operating areas (EOAs):

- Waikato Valley covers Hamilton and Waikato, Waipa, Otorohanga, and Waitomo districts
- Southern covers South Waikato to Taupo
- Thames Valley covers the Matamata Piako, Hauraki, and Thames-Coromandel districts.

During Get Ready Week 2010, Southern will have a trailer set up outside the Tokoroa Warehouse on 13 and 15 of October. This will give residents a chance to pick up a brochure and an emergency household checklist. There will also be a competition running in the local newspaper for a member of the community to win an emergency survival kit.

Waikato Valley will be running an earthquake exercise over four days. The scenario will be an earthquake that hits the Waikato region in the morning and will be felt in Matamata, Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Hamilton, and Morrinsville. This exercise will involve over 100 people and will activate the Waikato Valley emergency operations centre in Duke St, Hamilton.

Thames Valley will use posters and work with The Warehouse and other agencies to publicise Get Ready Week.

Further information about being prepared is available at:

<http://www.waikatoregioncdemg.govt.nz/>

and

<http://www.getthru.govt.nz>

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