



MEDIA RELEASE

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Intending Christchurch returnees urged to seek local advice

People who have self-evacuated to the Waikato after last month's Canterbury earthquake, and who are now considering returning, are being encouraged to talk to their neighbours in Christchurch first.

This will give self-evacuees a clearer picture of the situation on the ground at home, says Waikato Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.

Neighbours are likely to have the best local advice on what is happening in particular streets and suburbs - for example, what is happening with various essential services, as well as local traffic and roading issues. The website www.canterburyearthquake.org.nz is another useful source of info or call 03 941 8999.

Civil Defence has advised that returning Christchurch people should not enter their home if it has a red placard on it.

Power needs to be checked before entering homes to see if it is safe. Power company Orion on 03 363 9898 is a source of advice if people are unsure.

Water for drinking or cooking still needs to be boiled. Water can also be made safe by adding a teaspoon of household bleach per 10 litres of water and leaving for 30 minutes before drinking.

Alternative accommodation could involve staying with family or friends, or getting emergency assistance through a Recovery Assistance Centre.

The Ministry of Education at www.minedu.govt.nz has information about schools.

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