

An open offer of help and support to the people of Christchurch from BuildSafe®

BuildSafe® will waive entirely its registration and administration fee for use of the BuildSafe® Security of Payment Scheme on any building project for the repair, reconstruction, or replacement of any home or property damaged as a result of the earthquakes in Christchurch.

February's deadly earthquake in Christchurch has dealt the people of Christchurch another, and far crueller blow, than the September 4th earthquake last year. The city has suffered destruction on an unprecedented scale and as a result, disruption to economic activity will be significant and personal, family and social sensibilities will be vulnerable.

Cantabrians, and indeed all New Zealanders, face a massive challenge ahead in restoring the region following February's earthquake. Whilst we are beginning to come to terms with the human, financial, and economic impact of what has happened, both for the local Christchurch area, and nationally, this earthquake has traumatised people in a way last year's earthquake never did and the human dimension to recovery shouldn't be underestimated. The thoughts of all of us are with those affected.

However, the last thing that the people of Christchurch need now is to go from a natural disaster of unprecedented scale to building/financial disasters that would cause further unnecessary and unbearable grief, loss and suffering. Christchurch needs to be substantially rebuilt. There will almost certainly be competition for scarce building resources and many technically incompetent and financially under-resourced building contractors will quickly move to fill the gaps in the marketplace. Notwithstanding the obvious imperative to repair and rebuild family homes as quickly as possible, it will certainly not be the time to rush into contracts for any building work.

In truth, greater care, caution, and far more attention to detail than ever will be required by the people of Christchurch to ensure that the repair, reconstruction, and replacement of damaged homes proceeds on a sound commercial footing.

Property owners will need to ensure they proceed with proper documentation and careful financial planning to minimise the risk of loss as a result of non-performance by the contractor or financial failure on the part of the contractor.

Last year alone, 7,917 construction companies went into liquidation. This week has seen the collapse of one of the largest building companies in Auckland - Sovereign Homes, last week it was the largest development company in the bay of Plenty, Grasshopper Farms owing an estimated \$100 million, and commentators report the high probability of further building company failures in a significantly depressed and declining market.

Many of those contractors will have taken deposits from property owners for work that had not been started or over-claimed the value of work in place leaving insufficient funds available for owners to complete their projects. Those property owners will never recover that loss, yet the solution to this scandalous and commonplace problem is so simple – use BuildSafe® for every building project for peace of mind and financial security for all parties to the building contract.

BuildSafe® can help the people of Christchurch rebuild their damaged homes sensibly, safely, and with confidence, and it will help them protect their financial interests when they do.

We all have some attachment to the earthquake in Christchurch on some level – after all we are all New Zealanders and the pain and suffering of friends, family and fellow New Zealanders resonates with us all. We make this offer in the hope that we may in some small and positive way contribute to the rebuilding and healing process and assist the people of Christchurch as they move forward to rebuild their lives, communities, businesses and the beautiful city of Christchurch with optimism and confidence.