

Media Release

Joint approach to increase Residential Red Zone clearances

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A new co-ordinated approach between private insurers, the Earthquake Commission and the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority will ensure Crown-owned properties in the residential red zoned flat land are cleared by the end of next year.

In announcing details of the new approach today, CERA chief executive Roger Sutton commended the willingness of the various insurers to work together.

"Almost 40 per cent of the Crown owned properties have already been cleared in the flat land, but this has been happening in a sporadic way as each individual property owner settled with the Crown and/or their insurer," Mr Sutton says.

"Through this new approach we have sequenced a geographic approach working together by either demolishing or relocating the houses, clearing the land, fencing it and then grassing it straight away."

"Not all houses in the Residential Red Zone flat land will be demolished. Around 300 houses have already been relocated to other green zone properties, mostly throughout greater Christchurch. If people are interested in knowing more about relocating houses from the Residential Red Zone, they should check the options out with individual insurers, relocations companies, or call our info line."

The new approach sees the flat land red zone sectioned into 15 geographical areas and prioritised based on the least number of properties left to clear and where the work can be quickly completed.

By the end of next year all Crown-owned properties in each area will be cleared, starting in New Brighton today. The two remaining houses in this area will be demolished over the coming days, and the area will be sporting grass by Christmas.

Mr Sutton says this approach will ensure the area is tidy and safe for residents who remain living in and around the red zone areas.

Three trial sites were completed over the past year with good results for both the insurers and CERA.

"We have been working with the police and the Fire Service across the last two years to ensure that any issues within the red zone area are dealt with. But we know that the longer the Crown-owned houses remain standing, the more opportunity that provides, so we want to remove that risk as soon as possible," Mr Sutton says.

"There is a misconception that these Crown-owned properties are simply abandoned and therefore fair game, but these are owned by all of us as taxpayers. Any damage caused to these homes jeopardises the insurance reconciliation process, which means that in the end everyone pays the price."

Joint land clearance map [PDF 305KB]

This announcement was originally published on cera.govt.nz and beehive.govt.nz

This map only includes Crown-owned properties within the designated areas.

Video of the announcement: <https://youtu.be/IAOIymI3LFA>