

Media Release

Residents urged to sign up for access to Red Zone

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Residents who need to retrieve property from the Red Zone are being urged to ensure they are registered on the communications database ERNI to help them gain access.

Access programmes have already allowed a number of businesses and residents back into the Red Zone to get essential items.

The interim Chief Executive of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, John Ombler, says residents should be registered with ERNI (Earthquake Recovery News and Information service) by 31 May 2011.

"Getting back personal and important possessions can help people enormously," says Mr Ombler.

"Once you're registered with ERNI, and if your building is deemed safe, we can provide a two to three hour opportunity for you to remove personal items."

"A key priority will always be safety, and entry can only be approved once a structural engineer has confirmed the access route and the building itself is safe to enter."

To date, 230 people have gained access through the resident access programme.

There is also a separate business access programme so businesses can retrieve essential items to allow them to operate elsewhere. Around 1000 businesses (and 4000 people) have been provided controlled access via the Business Access programme.

Residents and businesses requiring access beyond the resident and business access programmes, can register for the temporary access programme.