Preparing for emergencies, strengthening communities
Gets Ready

The Gets Ready system has been six years in the making and is now a web based tool serving the communities of Te Awamutu, North Canterbury, Selwyn district and Christchurch. Web sites in the system include→

www.christchurch.getsready.net;

www.selwyn.getsready.net,

www.northcanterbury.getsready.net

www.commsafe.getsready.net and
www.demo.getsready.net

Here's what Douglas Marshall, Local Civil Defence Controller and Principal Rural Fire Officer for **Selwyn District** has to say about their experience of the Gets Ready system→

'Selwyn District Council are fully supportive of this software initiative. It is an excellent product for community groups to support their interaction with a council's Emergency Operations Centre. It is also a great way of building community resilience. During recent fire events, we were able to promptly alert the communities in our District at risk from the fire and advise them of safety actions to take. During flood and extreme wind events, the software allows our community response teams to capture their community issues and either resolve themselves or forward to us at EOC via the Selwyn Gets Ready web site. The software also allows for community contact information to be captured which means that we can also keep communities informed via agreed protocols about other community issues'.

Sally Lewis from Castle Hill area of Selwyn district provides a community perspective on the use of Gets Ready→

'It's made it easy for us as a community to be fully prepared for any CD emergency situation that may affect our village and to implement a community response team with effective procedures. We now have a full database of the needs, resources and skills of the families in the village which enables us to communicate with residents quickly and efficiently should the need arise. It has brought the community closer together, without being intrusive,

*and raised the awareness of residents to be prepared. It also enables fast, efficient communication with Selwyn Council if needed. **A must do for any community.'***

Would your community benefit from a dedicated version of the Gets Ready system?

- YES!! (Predictable answer).
- The online tool has proved its usefulness many times over in both Selwyn and Christchurch. eg. Recent flooding resulted in unsafe town supply water. How to let people know asap to boil their water? The GetsReady system allowed text messages and emails to be sent to specific groups of users – informing them of the situation and encouraging them to let neighbours and others know.
- Recent flooding around Selwyn and Christchurch caused concern. Community Response Team members could log in on their smart phone and create a situation report- with location and photos for use by the Emergency Operations teams.
- There's another big plus. The system shares volunteer workload. That's a real issue for many community efforts to prepare for emergencies.
- The system works at the very start of a Neighbourhood Support process – printing out street level contact forms and manages who sees and modifies information very carefully. It is a planned process that has been revised and enhanced over the last few years.
- Being on-line means you can access information wherever, and being able to download subsets to spreadsheets means teams are safe if the internet is totalled.

The foundation – Community ownership + partnership with relevant authorities

Here's how the structured approach works in, for example, Selwyn District→

Gets Ready assists in building networks among communities
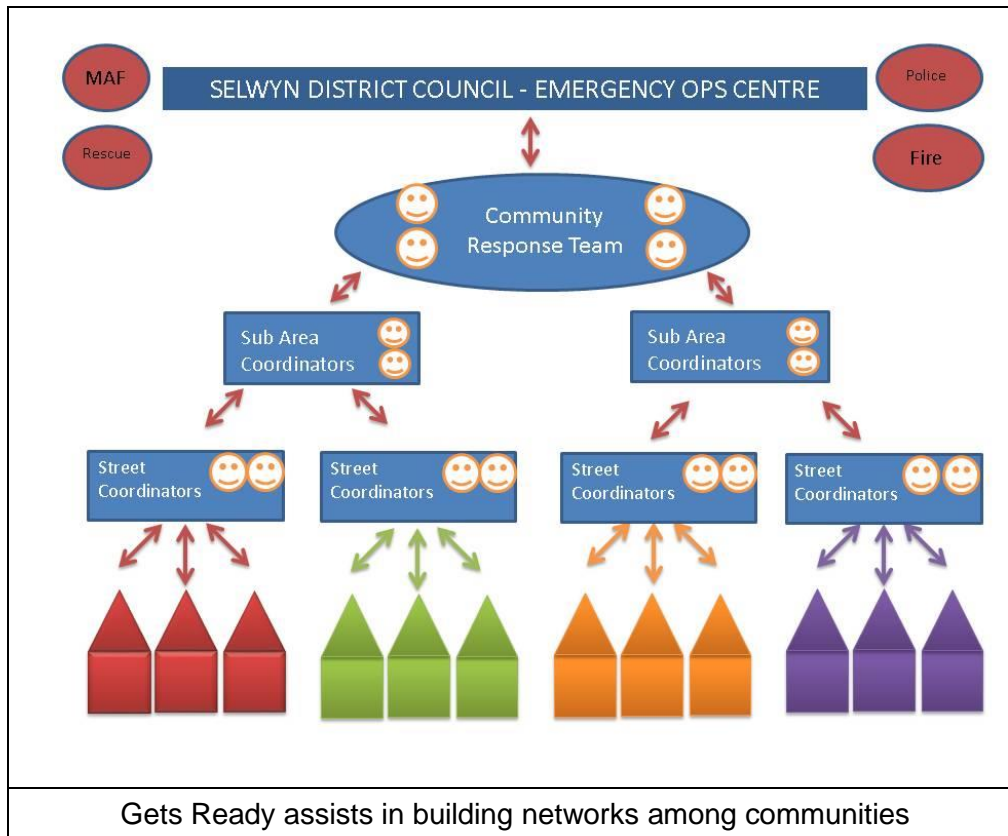
There is nothing particularly special about the structure drawn above. It's common sense. Break a large community into smaller areas and go right down to street groups who know each other's needs, skills and resources.

Key features →

1. Community ownership of their information – helping to keep the information up to date.
2. Use of google maps to identify where particular resources, skills, needs are located- along with the contact information for the people directly and their co-ordinators.
3. The process of sharing that information with the Emergency Operations Centres.
4. The ability to communicate with those people via text messages and emails

Neighbourly? (www.neighbourly.co.nz)

They (Neighbourly) promise not to share data – we absolutely promise to share data as per the emergency protocols and our system is designed with council emergency management teams needs in mind. Gets Ready works on sharing information.

We don't make any data available for targeted advertising… or any other purpose.

Privacy

Your privacy matters to us. You share the information you are happy to have emergency services know about in the event of an emergency. Because this is a community managed system, your community response teams and co-ordinators directly above you see the information you provide.

The public are given phone numbers of co-ordinators.

Costs?

For Neighbourhood support teams we have heavily discounted charges, but for normal council use by their Emergency Management Team there's some fees to help cover costs of running the system. Talk to us at dave@getsready.net.

We protect your data by having multiple servers in different cities set up so that if one is taken out others pick up the load seamlessly.

A major upgrade went live in April.