



Department of  
Building and Housing  
*Te Tari Kaupapa Whare*

## **Canterbury Earthquake: Information for landlords and tenants**

Tenants and landlords affected by the earthquake in Canterbury are encouraged to work together, and if possible, maintain good communication in situations where rental properties have been damaged and may be uninhabitable.

### **Tenants:**

- If you believe your flat or rented home is unsafe or uninhabitable you should attempt to contact your landlord and discuss the situation with them.
- If you are unable to reach your landlord, then your insurance company, local council, Civil Defence, or emergency services (Police or Fire Service) may be able to provide you with guidance as to whether or not you should stay in your home.
- If your rented property has been so seriously damaged as to be uninhabitable then under Section 59 of the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 you can give your landlord 2 days' notice to end the tenancy.
- If you are ending the tenancy, you may also cease paying rent.
- Check with your insurance company, local council, Civil Defence or emergency services if your house is safe enough to enter to remove your belongings.

### **Landlords:**

- We suggest you first contact your tenant, check they are safe, and whether the property has suffered damage.
- We also suggest you contact your insurance company to let them know if you may need to make a claim.
- If you are unsure if the rental property is safe for your tenants we suggest you follow the advice of your insurance company, Civil Defence, your local council or emergency services.
- If the property has been so seriously damaged as to be uninhabitable then under Section 59 of the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 you can give your tenant 7 days' notice to end the tenancy.

### **The Department of Building and Housing can help:**

- Our contact centre is open from 8:00am-5:00pm Monday to Friday on 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62).
- Advisors are available to help landlords, tenants and homeowners with any questions they have about renting law or their homes in the coming days.
- The Department is offering mediation services and advice appointments through Community Link Centres, Welfare Centres and our offices in Christchurch, where possible.
- General information for tenants, landlords and homeowners is available at the Department of Building and Housing website, [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz).

**For further advice contact 0800 TENANCY (0800 83 62 62)**