



Media Advisory

Bluecliffs State of Emergency

Number: 10

Date: 11 March 2024

Time: 1.40pm

Bluecliffs update

This is an official message from the EMS controller Paul le Roux

Update – Bluecliffs state of emergency - #10

On Sunday 10 March, Southland District Council Mayor Rob Scott extended the State of Emergency at Bluecliffs for another week, until Sunday 17 March.

“The decision to extend the state of emergency was made as we continue to support the community and progress work on the removal of the dump site material and the opening at the Waiau River mouth.

“Significant, swift progress has been made this week to start work on removing the material at the dump site and support the community through the evacuation needed to do this work safely.

On Wednesday at a community meeting, Bluecliffs permanent residents were asked to evacuate their homes by 4pm on Friday 8 March.

“The short notice, while we acknowledge was not ideal, reflected the need to get this work underway as soon as possible. This is not a typical emergency, and we’re grateful that we’ve been able to work with the individual residents at Bluecliffs and support them as much as possible.”

“Where needed we’ve been able to put in place a specific solution which provides additional supports and reassurance to these community members, while keeping their safety at the centre of our decisions,” Mayor Rob Scott said.

“I want to thank the Bluecliffs community for their ongoing cooperation and patience throughout this period, and I encourage them to continue reaching out either to Emergency Management Southland or to other support services.”

From Friday 8 March, a 1km radius of the dump has been set up with security in place 24/7. The work to remove the material may take up to three weeks. There are potentially explosives, asbestos and other hazardous material there, and the focus is on ensuring the safety of the residents and those working in the area.

From today (Monday 11 March), permanent residents will be allowed to go back into their properties for an hour and a half each night from 6.30pm-8pm. This is the intention but if there are any issues or health and safety reasons this may need to be reviewed.

The site was set up over Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with containers, fencing, machinery and cameras being installed at the dump site. Final preparations have been made, and working within dump site was due to start at 7am this morning, however strong winds have forced this to be delayed.

Attention has also been focused on the options for the gravel bar at the Waiau River mouth. A review of the work undertaken and independent advice on suitable next steps is expected soon.

“The community’s ideas for the opening will be considered alongside this independent advice, and we’ll discuss the next steps with the community before moving forward,” Mayor Rob Scott said.

ENDS

This release has been issued by the Duty Public Information Manager on the authority of the Southland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Controller.

Contact Duty Public Information Manager, ph 027 384 0104

Website: www.civildefencesouthland.govt.nz