

News release 8 June

POLYTECHNIC INVITES WEST COASTERS TO LEARN HOW DRIVE TO THE WINTER CONDITIONS

West Coasters will know whether their car is safe to drive on icy roads after this weekend's road safety event, held courtesy of Tai Poutini Polytechnic, ACC and Firestone.

The 'Drive to the Conditions' open day is focused on being prepared for driving in snowy circumstances and welcomes all members of the public to come along for free training.

The event is being held at Tai Poutini Polytechnic car-park at the Tainui Street campus in Greymouth on Saturday the 13 June between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

West Coast Road Safety Coordinator Ivan Wilson says the decision to launch the project followed discussions with local ACC Injury Prevention Consultant Cathy Blincoe, which resulted in combined common interest and motivation to set the event up.

"Between our organizations we have some similar road safety objectives, so we decided to join forces and help people come to grips with driving to the conditions in winter," he says.

Mr. Wilson says the main focus will be on fitting chains - a skill that is needed when weather conditions change quickly, particularly as locals head through the mountains to ski fields or the city.

"Due to the recent cold snap we are experiencing nationwide it is important to raise the question 'is your car good to go in the snow?' says Wilson. "Driving in icy conditions can be a very scary experience if you are not prepared or educated and can cause serious crashes."

Skilled operators and tutors will coach drivers on the safest and most effective way to fit snow chains and provide information on being prepared for the challenges of driving to the conditions.

Mr. Wilson says tackling the mountain passes will be a lot less daunting, particularly for less seasoned drivers if they get some "know how" before they make a trip.

He says there will also be other attractions on the day and entry to the community event is free.

"There'll be a BBQ, hot coffee, a bouncy castle and someone attending the event will win a set of snow chains from Firestone on the day."

Ends

For more information please contact:

Ivan Wilson

Tai Poutini Polytechnic

West Coast Road Safety Coordinator

www.tppweb.ac.nz

Phone: 03 769 9400

Mobile: 027 222 0130

Email: ivanw@tpp.ac.nz

About Tai Poutini Polytechnic:

Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) offers a range of exciting programmes including outdoor education, ski patrol, ecotourism, jade and hard stone carving, professional chef and civil construction. Tai Poutini Polytechnic has campuses in Auckland, Matamata, Christchurch, Wanaka, Invercargill, Westport, Greymouth, Reefton and Hokitika. In 2009 TPP offers programmes at Greymouth, Reefton, Westport and Hokitika Campuses with no tuition fees (conditions apply).