

LEAVE THE LAND UNDISTURBED

Be a guardian of the land and leave no footprints

Toitū te whenua



HE TOKI KI TE MAHI – IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING GOOD PRACTICE IN THE TRADES

Often the land you are working on has a ‘back story’, a story about how it is significant to both Māori (pre-settlement times) and Pākehā (post-settlement times) in New Zealand. The earthquakes in Christchurch disturbed the land and changed the landscape of the city. This tool box talk is all about why the land that we are working on to rebuild Christchurch is so important, and what that means to us when we are working on site.

For Iwi (Māori tribes) the importance of place, land and culture is part of tribal, family and personal identity. When Māori introduce themselves they start with the landscape from which they come from – the mountain and the waterways. The land (or whenua) is important to everyday living, both in the past when it was essential to survival by providing food (kai), and today as we think about the impact we have on the land and what we are leaving our children and grandchildren.

- Ngāi Tahu (the primary tribe of the South Island) have always valued how important the land is to the identity of the tribe – it is part of who they are.
- It is important that when you are working on a site that you are aware of the historical story, what was here before you, and what will be here when you leave.
- Where possible keep in mind the saying “ Toitū te whenua — Leave the land undisturbed”.

Questions

- *Do you have connections to ‘land’ where you come from? Is there a place that is really important to you - why is that?*
- *What can you do on site, in your job to look after the land?*
- *Do you know about the land you’re working on?*
- *Where could you find out about what was here before you?*