

## SAFETY AMBASSADORS MAKE THEIR MARK

Stratford residents will now have safer homes following a successful home safety project just completed. It was the result of many months of work by a group which included Central Taranaki Victim Support, the Taranaki Electricity Trust, ACC and the NZ Fire Service.

Twelve project ambassadors were trained by the Fire Service in all aspects of the project. Working in teams of two, they visited homes and talked about the benefits of smoke detectors and other home safety initiatives. The nine-month project was managed by Neil Volzke, deputy mayor of Stratford District Council.

Over 13,000 smoke alarms were installed in nearly 3,000 homes in central Taranaki, and reached approximately 85% of the population.

Every household was left with the ACC *Home in on Safety* leaflet and ACC's *Standing Up to Falls* was delivered to nearly 1200 people over 65. The *Preventing Falls in under fives* brochure was left with 350 families with pre-school children.

This project was highly commended in the New Zealand Safety Awards and this has inspired the project coalition to now begin working towards safe community accreditation with financial support from the Taranaki Electricity Trust.

Local Injury Prevention Consultant Kath Forde says the project was very well implemented and was efficient and thorough. "It really raised awareness of safety in general and received a high profile in the community," she said. "The challenge now is to run a maintenance programme. Annual reminders will be sent out and there will be other ways of continuing the awareness."



The project team, including IPC Kath Forde, front row second from left.