In total, 185 people were killed in the earthquake, making it the second-deadliest natural disaster recorded in New Zealand.

A Central City Red Zone was established on the day of the earthquake as a public exclusion zone in the Christchurch Central City. Since February 2013, it was officially renamed the CBD Rebuild Zone by government agencies, but remained to be known as the Red Zone. It gradually shrank in size and the last cordons were removed on 30 June 2013, 859 days after the earthquake.

Between 6,600 and 6,800 people were treated for minor injuries and Christchurch Hospital alone treated 220 major trauma cases connected to the quake.

80% of the city had no power.