

Property Management Focus.

Bringing you the [latest news](#) from the world of New Zealand property management.

Rental health check up



As we approach the cold and wet months of winter, it's the perfect time to ask your property manager to help complete some simple checks and maintenance on your rental property to benefit both you and your tenants. [Your property manager may be able to assist you with a basic checklist](#); however, the following are some basic rules of thumb.

[Ask your property manager to check whether your rental property is fitted with the required amount of working smoke alarms.](#) If not, it is essential to have these installed and monitored on an ongoing basis, preferably by a qualified contractor to keep your tenants safe in case of a fire, and to reduce your liability as a landlord should an accident occur. **[Smoke alarm regulations can be viewed via the following link:](#)** <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2016/0128/16.0/DLM6856201.html>

[Beat the queues in 2019 and have your insulation inspected now.](#) Your property manager will be able to organise this with a suitably qualified contractor on your behalf. If the report determines no insulation, or inadequate insulation, then now is the time to consider organising an upgrade, noting that this must be completed by July 2019. If further work is required to bring your insulation up to standard, it is an excellent time to book in works to avoid the rush in early 2019. Another important tip for landlords is to look at the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority's website for

information on funding programmes which may be available to them. Insulation regulations can be viewed via the following link: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2016/0128/16.0/DLM6856201.html>

[Before the cooler month's creep up on us, it is also a good idea to talk to your property manager regarding the health and safety aspects of your property,](#) ensuring that your home provides a healthy, warm and dry environment for your tenants. For example, items that need to be checked are decks, railings and paths. Another important tip is to ensure that balconies and guttering are well in good working order to prevent potential water damage and flooding. It may be a good time to talk to your property manager about setting up a 6-12 monthly gutter cleaning schedule with a suitably qualified contractor to avoid any nasty surprises during a heavy downfall.

[In addition to setting up a cleaning schedule for your gutters,](#) it is necessary for you to do organise the same with your chimney sweeping, as this must be carried out annually in accordance with

health and safety standards. Servicing is also recommended for wood and pellet fires, to warrant the safety of your tenants and property, and to ensure that your fireplace is burning more efficiently. If not completed, this may affect your insurance policy.

[During our cooler months, it is imperative to keep on top of dampness and mould to ensure the health of your tenants and the upkeep of your property.](#) One of the many things your property manager will check for during routine inspections is dampness and mould throughout the house, looking for mould on ceilings and walls, and potential water intrusion from adjoining bathrooms, showers, basins and vanities. Your Harcourts property manager will educate your tenant to encourage adequate ventilation which helps prevent the build-up of mould. Property owners also have responsibility to ensure that their investment properties are maintained in a condition that is not conducive to mould. Installing a bathroom fan and kitchen rangehood will help to tackle problems at source and is a very cost-effective solution for landlords.

WHAT'S HAPPENING in the property market?

In Auckland, the property market is showing signs of having cooled, with written sales dropping by 18.6% in February, compared to the same time last year and the average price down.



And across the country, sales have dropped off in all the regions.

Harcourts CEO Chris Kennedy says it shows the market is readjusting after the period of fast, and ultimately unsustainable growth, we saw in 2015/2016.

“I don't believe we are going to see a large drop in sales or prices, however I also do not believe we can realistically expect the market to continue the growth of the past

few years. We are returning to a balanced property market.”

Nationwide the average price now sits at \$540,678, which is an 11% drop from November 2016's all-time high of \$608,510.

Kennedy says we can expect prices around the country to even out, following Auckland's lead.

“The market cool down means sellers will

have to be more discerning about the ways in which they market and present their properties to captivate buyers.

“It means if you choose the right sales consultant and market your property well, you will achieve a good price. We've been spoilt by a strong market for a long time now, but with sales dropping a little it's important not to be complacent.”

Next steps on meth standards



New standards for the testing and decontamination of methamphetamine-contaminated properties (NZS 8510) may be delayed, with Standards New Zealand considering over 1200 individual comments on the draft version.

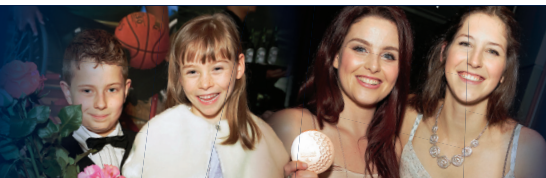
Many of the comments were several pages long, very detailed and submitted by organisations and individuals including District Health Boards; methamphetamine testing and drug testing organisations; decontamination contractors; environmental and health scientist and researchers; the insurance industry; Government agencies covering drug education, community housing,

and human rights; landlords, property managers, lawyers and real estate agents; and local authorities.

The final standards were to be published at the end of April 2017, however this date is likely to be pushed out due to the large volume of comments.

Once the standard is published, supplementary handbooks are likely to be produced, providing, for example, detailed practical information for those involved in carrying out decontamination of properties. Such a handbook could cover types of suitable cleaning materials, personal protective equipment for operators, and other details that cannot be covered in a standard.

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