

# Our landlords quick to insulate homes

By Tess Nichol

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Wanganui landlords are bucking the trend across North Island regions by outstripping homeowners in taking up a government offer for free home insulation.

More than 360 Wanganui rental homes have been insulated under the scheme so far, compared with just 260 owner-occupied properties.

Smart Energy Solutions, Wanganui's Warm Up New Zealand insulation provider, says this is due to a district council initiative which insulated about 240 council-owned flats during that period.

Smart Energy Wanganui-Manawatu regional manager Mark Becker said figures indicated owner-occupied properties are more likely to be

insulated from now on.

"The ratio of eligible owner-occupiers to landlords currently taking up the funding opportunity has been roughly 2:1 in favour of homeowners."

Nationwide, only a third of the 36,000 homes retrofitted with insulation since the Warm Up New Zealand: Healthy Homes initiative kicked off in September 2013 were rentals.

It is estimated more than half of uninsulated properties are rentals.

Under the initiative, homeowners or tenants are eligible for free or reduced cost insulation if they have a Community Services Card and the house is occupied by someone under 17 years or over 65 years.

In some regions, people at risk from illness linked to cold, damp housing are also eligible.