

# Maintenance Matters

## FREE SEMINAR

Before you invest in decorating, renovating, repairs or dealing with council permit or consent issues, find out how expert building surveyors can help you spend your money in the right place, once!

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### SPEAKER Sarah Symon

Sarah Symon from Realsure, one of NZ's leading home inspection companies. Established in 2000, Realsure is ISO 9001 registered, was involved in development of the NZ Inspection Standards, and newly launched Building Officials Institute of New Zealand, Accredited Building Surveyors.

The latest BRANZ home condition survey identified that we are spending less than half the amount we need to annually in order to maintain our homes to a good standard. It also found that homeowners often don't deal with issues until they become impossible to ignore.

As a nation we do tend to take something of a "she'll be right mate" approach to our properties, dealing with problems as they happen – but this really is false economy. Deferred maintenance can lead to much higher repair costs.

Planning and budgeting for ongoing maintenance for your home is the most cost effective way of looking after it, minimising the risks of unexpected and expensive, urgent remedial work "popping up!"

At Realsure we help you to assess the true condition of your home and create a maintenance schedule specific to the property to help you plan and budget for the next 12 to 24 months.

All Realsure inspectors are Accredited Building Surveyors. Their training and experience enables them to spot telltale signs of areas requiring attention or urgent repair which a home owner may not recognise until the situation has deteriorated further. By addressing these matters early you can avoid expensive repair costs resulting from "deferred" maintenance.

While a prudent home owner will have a professional maintenance inspection carried out every other year, it is also sensible to commission one before undertaking redecoration or renovation. This will help ensure your budget is going where it should and can help minimise the risk of uncovering issues that could blow your budget or prevent you doing the work.

We recently inspected a home where tiling had been put down on flooring which was rotting. The owner only discovered the problem when the washing



machine fell through the floor. Too often we see lovely tiled areas over damaged flooring and foundations. In this case, the room had to be gutted to replace the damaged flooring that had been tiled over. Had a maintenance inspection been carried out before renovation was undertaken, the problem would have been identified and replaced prior to renovating. The cost of the original redecoration was wasted and the costs more than doubled.

It is also important to ensure that any repair or redecoration work undertaken has the appropriate council consents if necessary, and you have the council sign off the completed work and issue a *Code of Compliance Certificate*.

Anyone thinking of "winging it" should think again? Unauthorised building work can cause major problems such as impacting on your insurance cover. Like maintenance, the most cost effective way of dealing with this is to spend the money doing it right the first time.

The most recent changes in the 2004 *Building Act* has led to many councils reconsidering their position and creating policy for dealing with these issues. Should you find that you have unauthorised building work or incomplete work, such as no *Code of Compliance*, in your home then Realsure can help you to work towards resolving issues through Safe and Sanitary, Unauthorised, or Incomplete Building Work inspections and reports that are recognised by councils.



One of the most common policy changes Realsure is asked to assist with is where home owners find they have an outstanding building Consent (past two years). Realsure has liaised with councils to develop an inspection process and report called an Incomplete Works Report. This provides the home owner and council with detailed information about the work undertaken and provides guidance in moving forward. Incomplete building work may also affect your insurance. Ensuring the work is done within the required time and a *Code of Compliance Certificate* is obtained upon completion is the cheaper and prudent option.

If you own a property, then this is a must see seminar to find out more about the inspections and reports provided by Realsure accredited Building Surveyors, and how they can benefit you both finan-



cially and ensure good maintenance of your home.

Another client we recently worked with had converted the garage to a self contained area and built a deck, all without consent. Both needed considerable upgrading and as they were built at different times, they required different reports and had different options and requirements from council. We were able to help the client sort through it all by providing the appropriate reports and direction. But, needless to say, it was an expensive option and it would have been far cheaper to have obtained the council permits and consent in the first place.

### CONTACT

Realsure currently operates in Wellington, Auckland and Hamilton. To book an inspection or for further information please call 0508 Realsure (732 578), 07 839 9931, or visit [www.realsure.co.nz](http://www.realsure.co.nz)

