

# Home truths

## Research to identify merits, risks



What is most critical is the surveyor's ability to identify the known weathertightness risk details.

Sarah Symon  
Manager of Realsure

Owners of leaky homes are likely to receive a 25 per cent contribution from the Government and a possible extra 25 per cent from their local council if proposed legislative changes are passed.

Parliament is awaiting its third debate on the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services (Financial Assistance Package) Amendment Bill which offers qualifying homeowners a voluntary compensation package — additional to the current disputes and litigation process for owners.

The package, based on agreed actual repair costs, is conditional on homeowners foregoing the right to sue local authorities or the Crown in relation to the claim. The Bill also proposes that homeowners still have the option to pursue other liable parties such as builders, developers and manufacturers of defective building products. (For more details, see <http://www.dbh.govt.nz/ws-proposed-financial-assistance>)

The majority of the most affected territorial authorities have agreed to participate.

The proposed legislation changes follow the Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) report commissioned by the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) in 2009, which advises that between 22,000 to 89,000 homes are, or could be, affected by weathertightness issues. Such an expansive range arises from uncertainty about exactly how many are affected.

It is this very uncertainty we are so often asked about and, given that in the past financial year about 51,000\* homes were sold nationally, there is a real risk a large number of these homes are being sold on.

When surveying a home under the NZ Residential Property Inspection Standard we are charged to survey non-invasively to look for evidence of significant issues, gradual deterioration or urgent repair; and



**WATER DAMAGE:** Between 22,000 and 89,000 homes are, or could be, leaking.

look for evidential failure, as well as potential risk. This requires a robust inspection by a well-trained building surveyor capable of identifying potential moisture ingress indicators, known risk details and how to use moisture detection tools correctly.

A property may present in good condition but be classified by design and location as riskier for weathertightness. The indication of moisture ingress will likely confirm failure at those areas, however, if we don't detect moisture it does not mean the home is not subject to failure. What is most critical is the surveyor's ability to identify the known weathertightness risk details.

Even when there is no moisture detected using a moisture meter or anomalies from a thermal imaging camera, it does not mean the home has not failed or will not fail. The extent of risk details, design and location will provide the truer indication of the home's risk of having failed, currently failing or likely failure.

Using just a thermal imaging camera will not assess your risk for issues and failure, and should not be relied upon unless used in association with an accredited or registered building surveyor.

Each home must be assessed on its own merits or risks. To do so properly requires a suitably qualified

person being an accredited or registered building surveyor.

We are often criticised by agents or home owners for identifying weather-tightness risks as making assumptions. However, the identification of risk is based on well-documented industry-based facts.

If you have concerns about your home, or the one you're considering buying, do your research.

The DBH website and your local council can provide useful information and your building surveyor can provide you with the facts.

\*REINZ Sales Statistics April 2010 to March 2011.

# Karakaka Lakes



### Homes priced from \$695,000

- Prime location - impressive growth area
- Handy to horse riding, fishing and golf
- Handy to motorway and Auckland Airport

### Brand new quality built homes

- Handy to pre-schools, schools and colleges
- Excellent range of homes ready to move into
- 10 year Master Build Warranty

**DIRECTIONS** ~ Travelling south on the Southern Motorway, exit at Karaka, turn right onto Hingaia Rd and then first left into Hinua Rd, then look for the Showhome signage.

[www.karakalakeshomes.co.nz](http://www.karakalakeshomes.co.nz)

**ASTON MARSH**  
ph: 0800 437 667

**FYFE**  
ph: 532 8452

**Spaceline**  
ph: 537 6222



Showhomes are open  
Saturday & Sunday, 11am-4pm