



This month's meeting: Mike Goodison from Work Safe

Mike Goodison from Work Safe to talk about current Health & safety compliancy relevant to Landlords and Property Managers .

Topics include: Commerical property owners as a PCBU, Understanding obligations when dealing with asbestos materials and more.

When: Wednesday 26 April

Start time: 7pm

Where: Distinction Whangarei, (formerly known as Kingsgate Whangarei), in the Hatea Room & Bar. 9 Riverside Drive, Whangarei.
Free parking! Bar & restaurant (bookings essential).

Top 5 Tips to Protect Against Meth Contamination

Barely a week goes by without a horror story involving a property damaged by meth contamination but, last week, the Tribunal ruled in favour of a Blenheim landlord trying to deal with such a situation.

In January, Tasha McCracken's rental property was discovered to be contaminated with meth and it cost her over \$14,000 for testing and remediation to get it back to a safe standard

But her insurance company covered the costs and now the Tribunal has ordered the tenant to pay McCracken over \$3,000.

The possibility of ending up in such a situation is a major concern for most landlords, so we have put together a list of our top tips on how to safeguard rental properties from meth contamination.

1. Precautionary testing

Always carry out rigorous pre and post tenancy baseline meth testing of rental properties.

Doing so means a landlord has evidence a rental property was meth free prior to a tenancy and can identify if any contamination occurs during a subsequent tenancy. This provides a baseline for the Tribunal should a landlord need to take action.

Meth Solutions director Miles Stratford said conducting professional testing might cost more money, but benefits and opportunities arise from it.

"Not only will it preserve the market value of a property, but it is often possible to charge more rent because tenants can be assured the house is meth free. This will also get better quality tenants who stay longer."

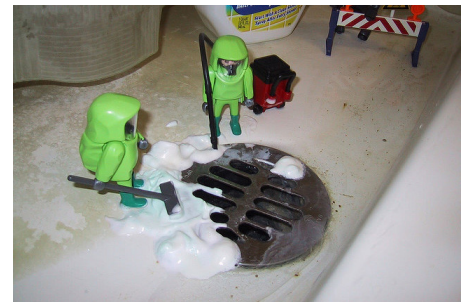
There has been a lot of confusion around accurate and safe testing and remediation levels to date.

But a Standards NZ committee is at work on producing a new standard on meth testing and remediation. That standard is now expected to be ready

We welcome guests!

Monthly meetings are open to NPIA Members AND invited guests (2 free visits per guest sponsored by any NPIA member).

Remember: Members need to bring their current NPIA membership cards to insert in the plastic name tag holder.



Inspect Regularly: Warning signs of meth manufacture include chemical stains around sinks, the toilet, the laundry or drains.

Photo by Melissa Trachtenberg, Flickr

in late May or June.

2. Get an alarm

It pays for landlords to install meth minder detector systems in their rental properties.

Meth minder systems utilise sensors, batteries and the digital cell phone network to detect gases associated with meth manufacture and issue an alert if anything is detected.

Chameleon Investigations director Debra Young said installing such a system helps compliance with insurance requirements, as well as mitigating the overall risk dramatically.

“Along with professional testing, it might seem like a bit of an outlay up front but, in reality, you are playing Russian roulette with your asset and your finances if you don’t do it.”

Tenants need to be informed that a property is monitored by a meth minder system but the idea is that the presence of the system itself will act as a deterrent.

3. Tenant selection is key

To find tenants who will care for the property and fulfil their obligations, landlords need to make sure that they undertake a comprehensive tenant selection processes with every tenancy.

Best practice in this area means methodically working through all the following steps:

- Asking potential tenants to complete a pre-application form, which includes information on renting history, and provide references.
- Interviewing potential tenants and finding out more information about their circumstances (including income), their renting history and how many people will be living in the property. It can pay to screen all those who will be living in the property.
- Checking the references of potential tenants. They should provide at least two referees.
- Running a credit history check on potential tenants. Landlords need to ask for permission to do this either in the pre-application or at the interview.
- Checking if potential tenants have been involved in tenancy disputes or have been to the Tribunal.

During the selection process, landlords can let tenants know if they have any specific terms they want to add to the tenancy agreement. One such term could be a meth testing agreement.

4. Inspect regularly

It is always a good idea for landlords to conduct regular inspections of their rental properties to check there is no damage and tenants are keeping things reasonably clean and tidy.

But regular inspections also provide a good opportunity to keep an eye out for any signs of meth manufacture.

Warning signs of meth manufacture include unusual chemical smells; lots of stockpiled chemical containers; numerous discarded cold tablet packages; chemical stains around sinks, the toilet, the laundry or drains; and yellow/brain staining of ceilings, walls, floors and surfaces.

Young added that landlords also have to make certain their property inspections, be they by themselves or a property manager, are carried out in a way which meets the requirements of their insurance policy.

5. Don't overlook insurance

Landlords must ensure they have got the right insurance cover in place. All too often, people think their policy covers meth contamination only to find it doesn't.

Veteran property investor Olly Newland said landlords should check their insurance policies to see if they adequately cover meth contamination situations. “If they don't, ask to have them extended to ensure they cover any potential property damage from meth.”

However, IAG corporate affairs manager Craig Dowling has warned that insurance for meth contamination can be complex due to different views and expectations. For this reason, IAG recently released an e-book of tips and advice in relation to the issue.

Article source: Landlords.co.nz written by Miriam Bell

NZPIF Media Releases... (Excerpts from 10 April —17 April 2017)

ARE LETTING FEES CHARGED TO RENTERS FAIR?

Letting fees charged to tens of thousands of renters are unfair, onerous and should be borne by the landlord, tenant advocates say. However, Property Investors Federation executive officer Andrew King said the service was to the tenant most of the time, because it diminished competition for a property. “The tenant pays a letting fee because they want to go to a property manager and only be part of a select few who are actually willing to pay the letting fee to get into a property.” In some markets where it was hard to tenant a property, the landlord paid the fee, he said. “It all depends on who's getting the benefit.” If renters did not want to pay a letting fee or could not afford it, they could rent a house that was being let by the landlord directly, Mr King said.

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/328526/forcing-renters-to-pay-letting-fees-'doesn't-make-sense'> - 10 April

MOVING INTO HOME OWNERSHIP HAS SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Getting lower-income families into home ownership won't just ease the housing crisis – it will have social, health and economic benefits across the board, new research says. Modelling done by economic research firm BERL for the foundation also shows moving renters into homes could save the government millions in hospital, jail and welfare bills, while boosting jobs and the tax take. Moving 1000 social housing renters into home ownership could produce a net fiscal saving of \$11.1 million over 15 years, BERL's data shows.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/business/residential-property/91450578/everyone-wins-when-lower-income-families-own-their-own-homes-says-study> - 12 April

<http://www.nzhf.org/recent-news/80-new-housing-research> - 12 April

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/328722/better-access-to-home-ownership-%27could-save-nz-millions%27> 12 April

NZPIF HOUSE AFFORDABILITY REPORT

The New Zealand Property Investors' Federation updated their numbers on how house buying in 2015 compares with 30 years earlier and found that things are actually not that bad.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/property/91516189/report-shows-saving-for-a-house-is-easier-but-taking-longer-than-30-years-ago> - 12 April

<http://business.scoop.co.nz/2017/04/12/its-always-hard-to-buy-a-home-report/> - 12 April

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/thepanel/audio/201840353/whats-the-degree-of-difficulty-buying-a-house-these-days> - 13 April Andrew King talks to Jim Moira and the panel about the NZPIF Affordability Report.

OWNERS OF SHORT TERM RENTALS WILL PAY HIGHER RATES FROM JULY IN QUEENSTOWN

Homeowners using short-term rental services like Airbnb may face tougher regulations in Queenstown, now New Zealand's most unaffordable housing area. So the council sent out warning letters to hundreds of people who rent out their houses for more than 90 days a year, telling them they must reclassify their properties as visitor accommodation or face a \$300 fine. And owners of visitor accommodation will pay higher rates from July.

<https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/queenstown-cracking-down-short-term-rentals-accommodation-pressure-rise> - 13 April

HOUSING MARKET VOLUMES AND PRICES JUMP TO REASSERT MARCH NORMS

This month the Real Estate Institute are pleased to launch the REINZ House Price Index (HPI). Developed in partnership with the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, the REINZ HPI provides a level of detail and understanding of housing activity over time to a standard higher than anything else available in New Zealand. REINZ HPI is the most accurate, timely and stable HPI in New Zealand and is at a world class standard.

<https://www.reinz.co.nz/Media/Default/Statistic%20Documents/2017/Residential/March/REINZ%20Monthly%20Property%20Report%20-%20Showing%20March%20data%202017.pdf> - 13 April

New Zealand's median house price rose 10 per cent to a new record in March, reflecting a lift in the number

of higher value properties sold, according to the Real Estate Institute. The institute has teamed up with the Reserve Bank to develop a new house price index, released today, which it says better reflects underlying house price movements, with the latest data showing the median price increased because of more sales in higher price brackets than lower ones.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=11837653 - 13 April

<http://www.sharechat.co.nz/article/9f6c68a6/nz-house-price-rises-to-new-record-in-march-as-more-pricey-homes-change-hands.html> - 13 April

<http://www.interest.co.nz/property/87066/median-house-prices-rebounded-strongly-march-although-reinzs-new-house-price-index>

LOWER PRICES MEAN BUDGET SQUEEZE

Flatter house prices are on the cards this year, but any decline in prices will have broader economic consequences, Infometrics is predicting. The economic consultancy has just released its latest forecasts and they show house prices falling in the second half this year to sit 2.7% below their December 2016 level. This decline will be due to the dampening effect of tighter mortgage lending conditions and higher interest rates. Infometrics chief forecaster Gareth Kiernan said the emergence of flat or falling house prices within the next few years will undermine consumers' willingness to spend. At the same time, the discretionary portion of households' budgets will be squeezed as interest rates gradually rise from their historic lows. <http://www.landlords.co.nz/article/6096/lower-prices-mean-budget-squeeze> - 13 April

HOUSING SHORTAGE SPREADS

It's not just Auckland feeling the squeeze from the housing crisis, people are living in garages in Wellington's Hutt Valley. The Wellington suburb is one of several regions with a severe shortage. The Hutt is experiencing a property boom, like many regions it's seeing a 'halo effect' from Auckland's overheated market. House prices have gone up 25.6 percent in the past year. That means what was a \$500,000 home is now worth \$628,000.

<http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/politics/2017/04/people-living-in-garages-in-wellington-as-housing-crisis-spreads.html> - 13 April

OVERHAUL OF PLANNING RULES LIKELY

Housing chiefs are poised to overhaul planning rules which could restrict people building waterfront properties as local government and insurance officials look to prevent repeats of recent widespread flooding. http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11837761 - 15 April

LANDLORDS NEED TO CHOOSE INSURANCE POLICIES WISELY

Landlords need to choose their house policies wisely to ensure they're covered when tenants accidentally or intentionally damage their property. A Court of Appeal judgment last year found the tenants weren't liable for

the cost of repairing the landlord's home for a careless act when that landlord has accidental damage cover, Stevens says. Landlords need to ensure their policy covers this. Tenants are still liable for intentional damage. But the line between intentional and accidental damage can be fine. http://www.nzherald.co.nz/personal-finance/news/article.cfm?c_id=12&objectid=11836174 - 16 April

AUCKLAND HOMELESS FAMILIES HAVE NO WHERE TO GO.

Emergency housing providers are warning more homeless families will be sleeping in cars, parks and garages in Auckland this winter because of a desperate shortage of cheap accommodation. Across Auckland, in Manukau, the Salvation Army is turning away two or three families a day. Policy analyst Alan Johnson said landlords did not want families on benefits. <http://www.radi.nz.co.nz/news/national/328571/%27we%27ve-got-nowhere-to-send-them%27> - 11 April

A DECADE OF ACUTE HOUSING CRISIS

Auckland's acute housing crisis appears set to drag on for at least a decade, with projections 100,000 homes are required to cope with an extra 290,000 people. Auckland's population growth is projected to rise 17 per cent over the next decade, against a 7 per cent gain for the rest of the country, according to Westpac's senior economist, Satish Ranchhod, in his monthly housing property analysis. Ranchhod also singled out Wellington and Christchurch, highlighting a shortfall of rental properties in the capital, albeit with building activity rising, while there has been a moderation in Canterbury building which would signal some drag on the economy in general.

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=11835794 - 11 April

ANZ Property Focus THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT

SUMMARY

Our monthly Property Focus publication provides an independent appraisal of recent developments in the property market.

CHIEF ECONOMIST CORNER: PACKING SOME PUNCH

The property market has cooled rapidly as the combination of loan-to-value ratio restrictions, higher interest rates (a turn in both the local and international cycles) and credit rationing dampen demand. That's provided a near-term hit to recent exuberance, though it's worth bearing in mind that a demand-supply mismatch will provide support and typically that's seen the market run away again after previous similar lulls. What is dif-

ferent this time around is that interest rates are moving up and appear set to continue to do so, and policymakers are more serious in their desire to quell excessive lending growth. This will reduce the potential for the market to lift in a material fashion from here.

See ANZ Property Focus for the full report.



Tenancy Practice, Scotney Williams

Tenancy Practice Service offers members a free short phone call for advice should you need it:

0800 483 626

scotney@tenancypractice.co.nz

If you need advice the short consult is provided by the association as a member benefit.

TPS also have very effective debt collection which also free provided you have the right clause in your agreements whereby the tenant agrees to pay debt collection costs relative to the tenancy.

NPIA Members can now join our Members Only group on Facebook. Current Financial members can email Julie Gordon: npiacontact@gmail.com to get an invite. Group members need to abide by the Admin rules of conduct.

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This Month's Useful Links

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podcasts.
[http://www.smconveyancing.co.
nz/fees.htm](http://www.smconveyancing.co.nz/fees.htm) Fixed Legal fees
[http://www.propertytalk.com/
forum/forum.php](http://www.propertytalk.com/forum/forum.php) Excellent resource
for Investors
Latest political REPORTS:
<http://www.nzpif.org.nz/news>
Facebook Investor Discussion
G r o u p : [https://www.facebook.com/
groups/340682962758216/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/340682962758216/)

TENANT WATCH

If you wish to check whether a prospective tenant is possibly not desirable to rent to, members are encouraged to search their name on the Ministry of Justice, Tenancy Tribunal website, select 'Tribunal Orders' tab.

Tenants who have been brought before the Tribunal and lost will have that decision lodged on the online Tribunal Orders register, it stays there for up to 3 years. Remember to use a tenancy agreement where tenants are required agree to credit and reference checks. This your first safe guard.

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Northland Property Investors Association and Noel Leeming Whangarei, Warkworth and KeriKeri have partnered to offer current financial members preferential pricing storewide.



Some of our nationally advertised specials may already be at lower prices than the Northland Property Investors preferential pricing offer. However, you will receive the best deal on the day for the product that you choose.

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