

## Healthy Homes Standards announced

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24 February 2019

The new Healthy Homes Standards have been announced by Housing and Urban Development Minister Phil Twyford.

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The Healthy Homes Guarantee Act passed in 2017 allowed for the development of standards to improve the quality of rental housing in New Zealand.

The detailed regulations will be finalised in the next few months, and then guidance and tools will be available to help rental property owners and industry professionals meet the new standards.

From 1 July 2021, private landlords must ensure that their rental properties comply with the standards within 90 days of any new tenancy.

Boarding houses must comply with all of the standards by 1 July 2021.

Housing New Zealand and Registered Community Housing Providers have until 1 July 2023 to ensure all their properties comply.

All rental properties in New Zealand must meet the Healthy Homes Standards by 1 July 2024.

The Healthy Homes Standards (HHS) are:

- **Heating** – Rental homes must have fixed heating devices in living rooms, which can warm rooms to at least 18°C. Some heating devices are inefficient, unaffordable or unhealthy, and they will not meet the heating standard requirements.
- **Insulation** – Rental homes must have ceiling and underfloor insulation which either meets the 2008 Building Code, or (for existing ceiling insulation) is at least 120mm thick.
- **Ventilation** – Rental homes must have the right size extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms, and opening windows in the living room, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms.
- **Moisture and drainage** – Rental homes must have efficient drainage and guttering, downpipes and drains. If a rental home has an enclosed subfloor, it must have a ground moisture barrier if it's possible to install one.
- **Draught-stopping** – Rental homes must have no unnecessary gaps or holes in walls, ceilings, windows, floors, and doors that cause noticeable draughts. All unused chimneys and fireplaces must be blocked.

Under the current requirements of the Residential Tenancies Act, landlords must ensure that their rental properties have the right ceiling and underfloor insulation by 1 July 2019.

Landlords who have installed new insulation since 2016 should already meet the 2008 Building Code, so they won't need to do anything further when the Healthy Homes Standards take effect.

However, landlords who didn't previously need to insulate under the current requirements, may now need to do so under the Healthy Homes Standards. Currently, if the property already has ceiling insulation which is at least 70mm thick and underfloor insulation, and both are in good condition, then landlords have not been required to take action.

Under the Healthy Homes Standards, all rental properties will need to have insulation which meets the 2008 Building Code, or is at least 120mm thick.

[More information about Healthy Homes Standards \(https://www.hud.govt.nz/residential-housing/healthy-rental-homes/healthy-homes-standards/\)](https://www.hud.govt.nz/residential-housing/healthy-rental-homes/healthy-homes-standards/)