

Keeping your rental warm this winter

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It's important to be aware of how your rental will perform in the colder months and how this can impact on the health of those living in the rental. Tenants are more likely to stay longer if a rental property is well-insulated, well-ventilated and cheap to heat. This in turn reduces the cost of high tenant turnover for the landlord.

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If you are a tenant or landlord about to rent, your tenancy agreement should include a signed [insulation statement \[PDF, 103 KB\]](#) (<http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/assets/Forms-templates/insulation-statement.pdf>) disclosing the extent of insulation in the property. It is the law. The statement must disclose if there is ceiling, wall and underfloor insulation, where it is, and what type and what condition it is in. The presence, type, condition and extent of existing insulation is a good indicator of how warm, dry and easy to heat that rental property will be in the winter months. Having this information will enable tenants to make an informed decision before committing to the rental property.

If you're living in a rental and are not sure if it's insulated, talk to your landlord. All rental homes must be insulated in the ceiling and underfloor, where reasonably practicable by July 2019. Visit our page on maintenance and inspections to read more on [compulsory insulation](#) (<http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/insulation/compulsory-insulation/>). A dry and well-ventilated home is healthier for tenants. Inadequate heating and ventilation can lead to mould growth and dampness. Dampness can lead to problems and can contribute to health issues, particularly in children. There are things landlords can do such as providing extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom and making sure the tenant can ventilate the house while keeping it safe and secure. Window stays can be good for this. Tenants can do such things as using any extractor fans and opening windows to air out the house each day - even during winter months. Dry homes also need less maintenance in the long run and are easier for tenants to heat.

Having a warm dry home benefits both the tenant and landlord in the long run. Tenants in a warm, dry home are far less likely to suffer avoidable illnesses resulting in unplanned medical bills, time off work and a shortage of money for rent payments. You can read more on the [EECA Energywise website](#) (<https://www.energywise.govt.nz/at-home/buying-and-renting/tenants/>).

Landlords who own well-insulated, dry rental properties with effective, affordable heating have a better chance of finding tenants quickly as well as attracting higher rent. You can read more on the [EECA Energywise website](#) (<https://www.energywise.govt.nz/at-home/buying-and-renting/landlords/>).

Tips to keep your rental warm and ventilated this winter

- Providing an effective, affordable heater, like a heat pump, flued gas heater, wood or wood pellet burner, will enable tenants to heat the living area effectively.
- The simplest way to ventilate your home, even in winter, is to open the doors and windows regularly to allow fresh air in. Good ventilation is important for maintaining healthy indoor air and reducing the amount of moisture in your home will make it easier to heat.
- Extractor fans that vent to the outside are good to have in wet areas of the home such as the bathroom and kitchen to help remove damp air. Bathroom extractor fans are often connected to the light switch so that they come on automatically and go off ten minutes after the light is turned off.
- Dryers vented to the outside reduce the amount of moisture released inside the house.
- Mechanical ventilation systems that source air from the outside may be a good option if tenants are out all day, and/or if the property is near a source of noise such as a busy road or airport. Some systems come with heat exchange units, which transfers the bulk of the heat from the outgoing air into the fresh air coming from the outside.
- Check for underlying causes of damp, such as broken guttering and leaks in plumbing pipes.
- Use this [checklist from EECA Energywise](#) (<https://www.energywise.govt.nz/at-home/buying-and-renting/buying->

[and-renting-tips/](#) to give you an indication of how warm and comfortable a home is - the more ticks the better!

[Visit our website to learn more \(http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/heating-and-ventilation/\)](http://www.tenancy.govt.nz/maintenance-and-inspections/heating-and-ventilation/).