

Utilities and other payments

What the landlord must pay

The landlord must pay the costs of owning the house. These are things like:

- property rates paid to the council
- insurance premiums for insuring the house (not the contents)
- body corporate levies if the property is part of a unit title
- hire charges for gas bottles, if the property has gas supplied by bottles as the main form of water heating and cooking (see below).

Here's an easy way to work out what costs the landlord has to pay for: if the costs still have to be paid when a tenant isn't living in the house, the landlord has to pay them. For example, because the council still charges rates, the landlord has to pay them even if no one's living in the house.

The landlord also has to pay for any utilities shared by different tenancies. For example, if one water meter reads the supply of water to two or more houses, or if the landlord's renting out each room in a house on separate tenancy agreements. If the landlord doesn't want to pay for utilities in these situations, they have to install separate meters for each tenancy to show how much electricity, gas or water each tenancy uses.

What the tenant must pay

The tenant must pay the costs of living in the house. These are things like:

- electricity and gas, including refilling gas bottles (see below)
- telephone and internet
- water charges, if the water supplier charges on how much is used.

Here's an easy way to work out what costs the tenant has to pay for: if the costs are charged only as a result of living in the house, then the tenant has to pay for them. For example, because the telephone company only charges when someone's living in the house and has the phone connected, the tenant has to pay this cost.

The tenant doesn't have to pay for any costs that the landlord has agreed in writing to pay.

What either the landlord or tenant may need to pay

The landlord is responsible for making sure a property has adequate means of heating water and cooking food. Where gas is the main form of providing hot water and cooking, the landlord is responsible for access to a gas supply.

Most properties will be on a gas reticulation system. But in some towns and cities, gas is often supplied to properties in large gas bottles rather than by mains supply. Therefore, the landlord is responsible for providing the property with a gas cylinder and any piping needed to connect the gas to the cooking facilities and the hot water cylinder.

If there's a hire charge for gas bottles, the landlord will be responsible for this cost. However, the cost of the gas used is the tenant's responsibility.

Many landlords and tenants agree at the start of a tenancy (and record it in the tenancy agreement) that the landlord will provide a full gas bottle at the start of the tenancy, and the tenant will make sure it's full when the tenancy ends.

Any insurance a landlord has for the house benefits the landlord only and doesn't cover the tenant or their contents. A tenant should arrange insurance to protect their contents and liability for damage to the landlord's property.

[Insurance \(http://mbie3.cwp.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/ready-to-rent/insurance/\)](http://mbie3.cwp.govt.nz/starting-a-tenancy/ready-to-rent/insurance/) has advice for landlords and tenants about insurance.