

A holistic approach to heating your home

Heating for many Kiwis means a warm living area while the rest of the home stays cold. Deb Tapp looks at the European approach of whole home heating.

Central heating is under-rated in New Zealand. That's according to New Zealand Institute of Central Heating secretary Paul Woodgate, who says, contrary to popular belief, central heating is an affordable and effective form of heating. "The biggest pool of people who install central heating are those who are either from Europe or have visited Europe, because they understand central heating," says Paul.

"The issue in New Zealand is that when people think heating, they are thinking log fire or heatpump, a single appliance that will heat a room, not a whole house."

There are two types of hydronic central heating, radiator or under floor.

Radiator is where a central boiler heats water, which then circulates through a network of pipes to a series of radiator panels.

The heated water heats these radiator panels before returning to the boiler to be reheated and re-circulated.

The radiators heat quickly to provide radiated and convected heat, and each radiator can be fitted with a thermostatic radiator valve so homeowners can control the temperature of each room. The same central boiler can also heat hot water cylinders.

Underfloor heating is an "invisible" heating system that works by pumping a controlled flow of warm water from any heat source, such as a gas boiler or heat pump, through tubing embedded in the concrete floor.

It can also be installed in renovations, where the tube fits in slim panels that sit directly on top of the existing floor. Because the

emitting area is large, sufficient warmth is provided across the whole floor surface to heat the room effectively.

Paul says the high efficiency ratings of condensing heat sources means both under floor and radiator central heating are one of the most efficient ways to heat a home.

"Most importantly, performance is maintained irrespective of the temperature outside, unlike some other heating alternatives."

"People often have this picture of central heating as the old hospital and school heating where the radiators were these big cast iron, boiling hot metal slabs that left you sweltering away."

New Zealand Institute of Central Heating secretary Paul Woodgate

Yet Paul often hears comments that New Zealand is more of an outdoor society, or that New Zealand winters aren't that bad, therefore central heating is not necessary.

The other main talking point is that central heating is expensive.

"These are common reasons that dissuade people from central heating, but the benefits are far-reaching," says Paul.

It's just a matter of dispelling myths and changing mindsets, he says.

"Central heating gives you an even heat throughout the entire house, which means you have a drier, healthier home."

In comparison, Paul says a heatpump or log fire can heat a room but not usually an entire

home, which means people are going from a warm room to a cold one.

"Central heating maintains and cultivates a more comfortable heat throughout the house, whereas if you go from a warm room to cold room building materials can't cope with that and you start to get mould and dampness."

"We've seen the health benefits first-hand – a number of our customers have had old villas they've done up, containing mould in corners and on the walls, and are concerned their kids are getting asthma or colds."

After installing central heating, Paul says children haven't suffered from asthma or from repeated coughs and colds, and mould and mildew has disappeared.

Running costs are minimal too. One Wellington couple who

installed central heating fuelled by natural gas paid about \$250 a month in their big old house last year for heating, water heating and cooking.

"People are in that mindset that a heatpump is cheaper, but a heatpump will only heat a single room - if you put a heatpump in every room to heat the entire house, it would work out far

more expensive."

Money isn't wasted heating unused rooms either.

"You can set each room up with its own temperature so that you're not burning excess energy and you can control it as you see fit," says Paul.

"Some people are happy at 17 degrees, it's comfortable and they're happy with a jumper on, while others might want 21 degrees and walk around in their underwear!"

The initial outlay may be more costly, simply because the infrastructure must be installed, but long-term Paul says homeowners

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will reap the benefits.

Existing homes will only have the option of radiator central heating, while new builds can install under floor easily.

The type of heat source will depend on location, says Paul, but the options include LPG, natural gas, wood burners, waste oil or diesel boilers, ground source or air to water heatpumps.

Before installation, it's also important to ensure the house has decent floor, ceiling and wall insulation and, preferably, double

glazed windows.

"You need to maximise that envelope, otherwise all the heat will literally go out the walls and you'll have higher running costs because you can't keep the heat in."

Also consider the position of radiators.

"In Europe they are generally placed under windows, because it's the best use of wasted space, but they have double or triple glazed windows there."

"Here you wouldn't put a

radiator under a window because they'll more than likely be single glazed and the heat will just go straight out."

Once installed, Paul says under floor heating should never be turned off, only turned down.

"It can take up to a day to get up to temperature so if you're turning it on and off all the time, the floor probes will be working overtime."

Radiators though can be turned on and off, because the boiler can heat water quickly.

With either option, Paul says it's a good investment.

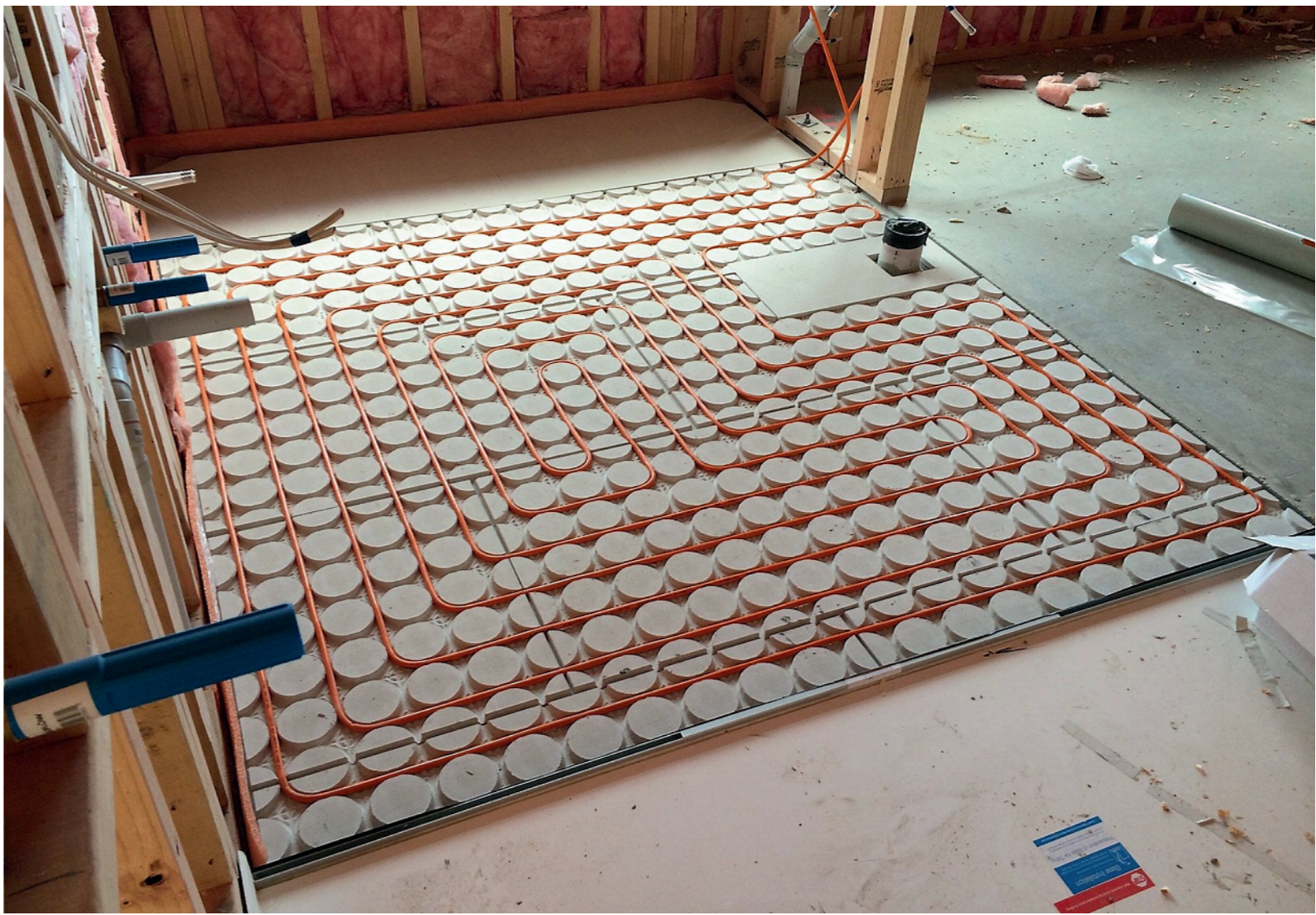
"People often have this picture of central heating as the old hospital and school heating where the radiators were these big cast iron, boiling hot metal slabs that left you sweltering away."

"These days central heating is nothing like that – it's an even, comfortable temperature that is better for your personal health and the health of your home."

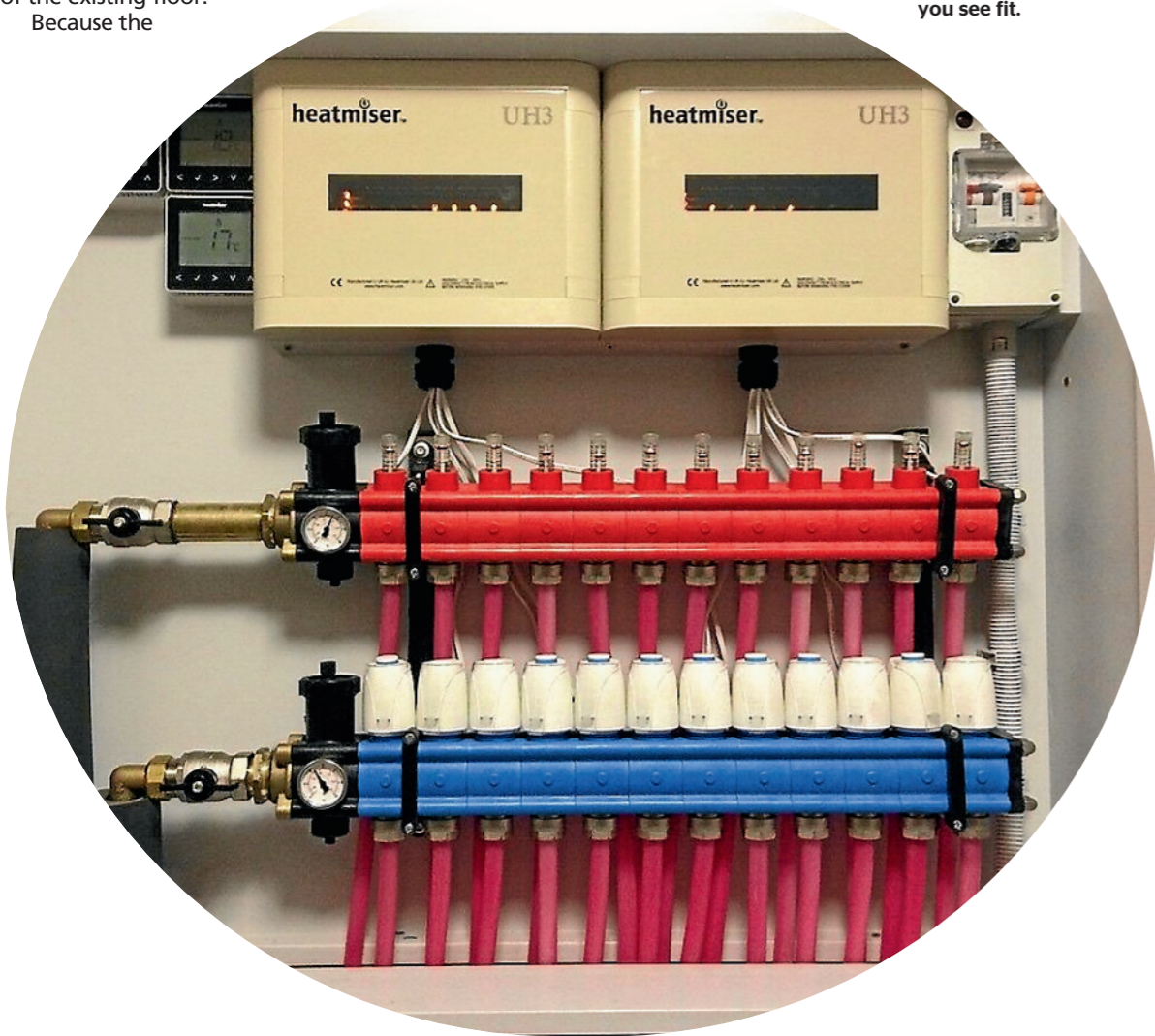
● For further information visit www.nzich.nz.



Hydronic central heating works by pumping heated water through a series of tubes that are embedded in the home's concrete floor.



Underfloor heating can also be installed in renovations, where the tube fits in slim panels that sit directly on top of the existing floor.



Latest House Values

Wellington

Suburb	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	5 bedroom
Aro Valley	\$645,000	\$778,500	\$919,000	\$991,000
Berhampore	\$530,000	\$827,000	\$925,000	-
Brooklyn	\$671,000	\$822,000	\$999,000	\$1,157,000
Mount Cook	\$578,000	\$766,000	\$890,000	\$639,000
Mount Victoria	\$573,000	\$1,127,500	\$1,512,000	\$1,992,000
Newtown	\$645,000	\$827,000	\$977,000	\$1,106,000
Oriental Bay	\$1,050,500	\$1,770,000	\$2,641,000	\$3,382,000
Roseneath	\$747,000	\$1,018,000	\$1,441,000	\$1,996,000
Te Aro	\$547,000	\$762,000	\$853,000	\$1,148,000
Wellington Central	\$467,000	\$597,000	-	-

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Restoring timber furniture and decking

Timber decking and wooden furniture can look worn over time as our harsh climate takes its toll, but with the right tools for the job, your timber can look close to brand new in no time!

Kennards Hire have put together some tips to help get your timber furniture and decking looking rejuvenated with a bit of sanding and recoating with a protective finish.

Restoring timber furniture

Restoring your dirty timber furniture doesn't have to be difficult. With a suitable timber cleaner, old paint or varnish can be removed and will leave the surface of your furniture looking much tidier. For a cleaner look, you'll need a flexible sanding block which will enable you to easily work around tight spots. For larger surfaces such as legs, armrests or table-tops, use an orbital sander.

Consider hiring a belt sander if you need to remove a lot of old paint or a large stain, however, be aware that it can remove 1mm or more from a timber surface very quickly! Once you have finished cleaning and sanding your furniture, dust down and paint with your preferred timber oil or timber treatment.

Restoring timber decks

Your deck is not only affected by the weather but also worn away by the wear and tear of general foot traffic,



Depending on the condition of the deck, you may need to hire a floor sander to smooth out the timber.

dragged furniture and damp pot plants. Re-coating your timber decking at least once every couple of years will keep it from looking dull, and by doing so, it'll only need a quick touch-up now and then.

Start rejuvenating your deck with a quick clean. Ensure that loose debris is removed and that ingrained dirt is cleaned with a suitable timber cleaner. Before continuing any further work, make sure that the timber is given time to dry.

A pressure washer fitted with a rotary cleaning head is the ideal

preparation for pre-painting, however, be careful when using pressure cleaners on treated pine decking. If the nozzle is held too close to the timber or you work against the timber grain, it can cause surface damage.

Ensure all the wooden boards are securely fastened and look closely for any popped nails or loose screws. Tighten up loose screws with a screwdriver and use a nail punch to tap nails down below the timber surface. If any nails are rusted, remove with pliers and replace them.

Depending on the condition of the

deck, you may need to hire a floor sander to smooth out the timber. Either way, you will need a floor edger to sand right to the edge of the floor beside walls, railings and posts. Ensure that you vacuum or sweep away sawdust before recoating.

You'll find coatings and deck oils have recommended application methods, so follow the instructions carefully. Most are best applied with a blowing paint applicator, similar to a mop, to get maximum coverage. However, for larger decks consider using an airless sprayer if your paint type is suitable.

Weather to proceed or not

One point to remember is that if you try to do any of these tasks on a very windy day, you are going to get poor results. Dust, hair and other debris blown onto the surface will give it a rough appearance. If you choose a fine, clear day, the deck should be touch dry in one to two hours, but it's best not to walk on it for four to six.

With these tips, you can keep your deck in good shape all year round - it does take preparation, so be careful not to rush into it! Your local Kennards Hire team will be happy to answer any questions you have about your next weekend project.

For more information or to find your nearest branch visit kennardshire.co.nz.