

Winter chill gets the chop



A thing of the past for Marion Utiger of Timaru. Now her home is insulated and she has an efficient heat pump.

A strange thing used to happen in Marion Utiger's Timaru house during a winter southerly.

Her house was so draughty that a good storm was enough to send her living room carpet billowing – even when her cat was sitting on it. The ice that formed on the inside of the windows didn't impress her either.

Since she moved into a small, mostly uninsulated brick house five years ago Marion had relied on a smoky potbelly stove and two gas heaters for warmth. Hauling the wood up her path to the shed, stacking and splitting it, and heaving the heavy gas cylinders around was becoming a real strain for Marion, who has fibromyalgia (muscle inflammation) and is asthmatic.

So, when Marion heard, via Greypower, about Environment Canterbury's Clean Heat Project she decided to find out more. After she'd applied successfully for assistance, ECan assessors visited to check out her insulation, draught source and heating needs.

Just a few months later, tradesmen were on site putting in insulation under the floor and in the ceiling, and installing a new floor-standing heat pump.

Marion, who works part-time, says that without the financial assistance from the Clean Heat Project she could not have had these improvements.

"The difference is just beautiful. I come in from work, put on my heat pump, go outside to check on my pets and by the time I am inside again my living area is lovely and warm. It's so quiet too."



See inside for more stories about Cantabrians who have sought Clean Heat Project help to warm up their homes.

For more on subsidies and loans available through the Clean Heat Project, visit www.cleanheat.co.nz or phone 0800 32 92 76.

Cleaner air with Environment Canterbury's Air Plan

If you live in Christchurch, Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Ashburton or Timaru – all urban centres which suffer from polluted, unhealthy winter air – Environment Canterbury's Air Plan has rules designed to improve your neighbourhood's air. For maps of the clean air zones in your town, see www.ecan.govt.nz/woodburner-rules

Christchurch

From next winter, April 2010, open fires and burners 15 years or older cannot be used for home heating from April to September each year in Christchurch Clean Air Zone 1. This zone includes most of Christchurch – Belfast to Halswell, Templeton to Sumner, but not Lyttelton or Banks Peninsula. Penalties for using open fires or older burners will apply from April 2010.

Kaiapoi

From May 1, 2011, open fires and burners 15 years or older cannot be used for home heating at any time of the year in Clean Air Zone 1.

Rangiora

Similar rule provisions have been made as for Kaiapoi, but these are currently under appeal for Rangiora.

Ashburton

Public hearings have been completed and the outcome is likely to be similar to the rules for Christchurch, Rangiora and Kaiapoi. However, the date for phasing out open fires and older burners is not decided at time of going to print.

Timaru

The Air Plan rules for Timaru remain in the early stages of public consultation, but a similar outcome to other centres is anticipated.



Community helps set environmental priorities

More than 560 Canterbury people and organisations had a say on the projects and activities that Environment Canterbury is proposing to undertake in the next 10 years, as set out in its draft long term community plan.

Environment Canterbury chairman Sir Kerry Burke says the submissions will help set work priorities. "We had a great deal of interest in some of the proposed programmes, particularly around changes to funding for water management, Bovine Tb control and the introduction of a Uniform Annual General Charge to fund core services which benefit all ratepayers equally."

All submissions will be considered by the Council during June with decisions on June 25. The draft plan proposes a 2.7% increase in overall rates for the coming financial year.

See inside for the winner of the 'Favourite Places' prize draw.

Clean Heat Project works wonders



...as these Canterbury householders explain:

Rangiora woman did it anyway



Sylvia Walls and her cat Prada love their new log burner.

Rangiora resident Sylvia Walls was told by a friend not to replace her old log burner. "They said that the newer, environmentally friendly ones were supposed to be no good and didn't put out enough heat," says Sylvia.

But Sylvia went ahead anyway, through the Clean Heat Project, and is glad she did as she now enjoys a much warmer home and healthier air.

"There would often be smoke coming from our old burner. Now we can open all the doors to heat every room, and the house is so warm of an evening and during the day."

Sylvia and husband Alistair also had insulation installed under the floor and throughout the roof.

She has already noticed an improvement in her health. "I used to suffer colds and bronchitis, especially during winter, and this time I haven't had any problems. It was easy to join Clean Heat and the guys installing the new burner were so friendly. They even stayed for morning tea."

Kaiapoi home cheaper to heat with pellets

Not only has a new pellet fire provided Wendy Quigley and her family with a warmer, drier home, but it has also proved a cost-effective method of heating.

"Before I got the new burner I was spending up to \$200 on wood each month. The pellets cost less and I don't have the hassle of going out in the cold to bring the wood inside."

The Kaiapoi resident and artist says that her new fire and the insulation has made all the difference, especially in the mornings and now the cold weather is here. "With my old fire, if the wind was blowing the wrong way the smoke would come back down the chimney," says Wendy. "Now it's warm right throughout the house and my kids' health has improved as well. They're not coughing at night like they used to."

Wendy adds that Environment Canterbury's Clean Heat assessor was great to deal with, working out exactly what she needed for cleaner, money-saving heat.



Kaipoi's Wendy Quigley refills her new pellet fire.

Jackets off in Ashburton



Winston and Gay Lees are now warmer thanks to insulation and a heat pump.

Ashburton residents Gay and Winston Lee have only had their new heat pump and insulation for a month, but already they are warmer.

"We just flick a switch. It's never been easier to be warm and I don't miss carting the wood in," says Gay.

Their 1970s open plan home used to rely on an ageing log burner and an open fire which they never got any warmth out of, so Winston knew it was time to upgrade. "During winter we often had our jackets on inside," he recalls.

The couple qualified for a Clean Heat Project interest-free loan in March after spotting publicity in a local newspaper. After an assessment, they were recommended an eight-kilowatt heat pump and insulation under the house and in the ceiling. As soon as the insulation went in, Gay stopped feeling a chill on her face in bed.

Running the heat pump on its lowest setting of 16°C, Gay loves the way the heat spreads into the adjacent rooms.



Am I eligible for Clean Heat?

You can get financial help to comply with the new rules from the Clean Heat Project if you live in Christchurch, Kaiapoi, Rangiora, Ashburton or Timaru and rely on an open fire or log/solid fuel burner more than 15 years old to heat your main living area.

In Christchurch there is a wide range of financial help available – subsidies, interest-free loans, full subsidies for low income groups – thanks to the higher targeted rate. Landlords are also eligible for help.

Already 14,000 households have benefited from the Clean Heat Project in Christchurch. Another 13-14,000 households can do the same leading up to 2013, when the national clean air standard applies.

In Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Ashburton and Timaru the Clean Heat Project offers financial assistance to people up to \$5000 in value, payable interest-free with your rates bill over 10 years. There is also funding available in partnership with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA).



For help from the Clean Heat Project phone 0800 32 92 76, or see www.cleanheat.co.nz
For general information on the Air Plan, visit www.ecan.govt.nz/air
For more on the government's new grants for household insulation and clean heating, visit www.eeca.govt.nz



With and without plastic film.

Dripping windows?

Can't afford double glazing? A cheaper form is available: thin plastic film taped to the inside of a window frame. It prevents condensation from forming and reduces heat loss. All you need is a pair of scissors and a hair dryer. Kit prices range from \$9.50 to \$24.70. Get your kits from:

Community Energy Action, 198 Armagh St, Christchurch, 03 374 5698 or www.cea.co.nz



Your favourite place

Environment Canterbury asked you to nominate your favourite place in the region in this year's draft long term plan. The winner of the draw for a night in Hanmer is Jane Myhill, of Christchurch. She loves the upper Rangitata River beyond Mt Peel.



Jane Myhill's photo of the upper Rangitata.

"This place of contrasts encapsulates Canterbury. It's vast – big sky, fierce wind, steep rugged hills rising above the braided strands of the river. Within the vastness, small things thrive – tough little plants that grip the river stones, tiny butterflies and beetles. There are reminders of our history (Mesopotamia Station at the end of the road) and our future (signs telling us how to keep this place didymo-free). I keep this special spot in my heart as I live my daily life in Christchurch city."

Other favourite spots that you nominated included Benmore, the Waitaki, Glenavy, Tekapo, Timaru and Waimate in the south, the Rakaia, Waimakariri and Ashley Gorges, the Ashley River mouth, and Kaikoura, St Anne's Lagoon, Gore Bay and Hanmer in the north.

Around Christchurch, the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula bays received lots of compliments, as did the Hinewai and Otukaikino Reserves and Pegasus Bay. "My place" (i.e. your own home) was another popular choice – from high country stations to the suburbs of Christchurch.

i Other photos of your favourite places have been posted on the ECan website – www.ecan.govt.nz/favouriteplaces



Gary Foster at work to enhance biodiversity in Talbot Forest.

The Talbot Forest Working Party



Honda TreeFund recipient

In the late 1990s a meeting was held in Geraldine by people concerned about the future of Talbot Forest, home to the endangered long-tailed bat or pekapeka. As a result, a working group was set up and Gary Foster, parks liaison officer at Timaru District Council, has been involved ever since.

"There was concern around the sustainability of the forest – because it is so close to an urban area – in that the values there might be diminishing instead of being maintained," he says.

The group looks after the unique remnant forest. One objective is to establish bush linkages to Talbot Forest and good progress has been made. "We are starting to create and build wildlife corridors to ensure seed supplies and bird life are maintained."

In 2008 the group received \$5,000 from the Honda TreeFund to re-vegetate a vacant area of land adjacent to the forest, contributing another valuable stepping stone to the wildlife corridors. All plants are sourced from the forest and nearby.

Talbot Forest contains very old matai, totara and kahikatea, many bird species such as bellbirds and tui, and a small population of pekapeka.

i For further information, call ECan resource care officer Melanie Schauer, 03 435 0491 or Gary Foster, 03 687 7200.

Improving the health of the Heathcote River/Opawaho

...by starting at the source

They might not be suitable for swimming, they're definitely not drinkable, but they do mean a lot to Christchurch people. The Garden City's two rivers – the Heathcote/Opawaho and Avon/Otakaro Rivers – are important to city-dwellers, who would like them to be healthier.

Partly in response to the diesel spill into the Heathcote from the industrial southern motorway area in 2005, Environment Canterbury and the Christchurch City Council are now working together to improve the health of the city's waterways.

Water quality in the two rivers is affected by what happens upstream, so Environment Canterbury is focusing initially on learning more about what contributes to pollution in the Heathcote River/Opawaho and its tributaries the Haytons and Papanui Streams. These two streams carry stormwater (what you see in the gutter) from the residential and industrial areas of Hei Hei, Hornby and Sockburn.

"The city's streams and rivers are important to Christchurch people"

Crown Research Institute NIWA has started water sampling in the streams. Its research forms part of a long-term programme to understand the key sources of pollution and then determine ways to reduce pollution, with the help of the community.

"The city's streams and rivers are important to Christchurch people and it will take time to restore their health. Our programme will start to do this over time and we all have a role to play in making sure the things we do help speed their recovery," says Environment Canterbury's urban waterway programme leader Jenny Bond.

Next Living Here: Focus on the Avon - what ECan's pollution prevention team is doing to reduce pollution getting into the Avon River/Otakaro, in particular the Addington area which feeds into Hagley Park's streams.

i For more information please contact Jenny Bond at Environment Canterbury – email jenny.bond@ecan.govt.nz



Janine Wech, freshwater ecology scientist from NIWA, taking a water sample from Haytons Stream, with ECan water scientist Michele Stevenson.

FUNDING

for Environment Enhancement

APPLY NOW!

Environment Canterbury's Environment Enhancement Fund provides grants of up to \$5,000 to individuals and groups working to protect and enhance Canterbury's biodiversity. The fund is also supported by the Honda TreeFund. You can apply between June 1 and August 31.

Go to www.ecan.govt.nz/eef for details, an application form and to see who received funding last year.

Friday 5 June is
World Environment Day
For more information visit
www.sustainability.govt.nz/wed



Building a large dam?

Environment Canterbury now issues building consents for large dams in the region.

For more details visit:
www.ecan.govt.nz/dams

A large dam retains three or more metres depth of water, and holds 20,000 or more cubic metres – about the size of a rugby field filled to the cross bar.

Time to prepare for the

Science Fair!

kids Living Here

Lincoln University, Canterbury – Westland Schools' Science and Technology Fair (Christchurch)
 Sunday 13th and Monday 14th September 2009, Christchurch Convention Centre

Sanford Science and Technology Fair (Timaru)
 Wednesday 16th and Thursday 17th September 2009, Caroline Bay Hall

The fairs celebrate excellence in science and technology. Exhibits are judged by experts from industry, research organizations, universities and schools.

The Environment Canterbury School Awards

The Environment Canterbury School Awards is a category in both the above science fairs.

To be eligible, your project needs to focus on sustainable resource management – ways we can look after and conserve air, land and water. Other topics can involve energy use such as sustainable transport, renewable sources of energy and waste management. All entries with an environmental theme will automatically be judged for the award. The judges will be looking for inventive solutions to environmental problems.

Two categories: JUNIOR (Year 7-8), SENIOR (Year 9-13)

Prizes: 1st \$400, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$80

\$1000 goes to the school of each category winner.

But wait, there's more!

The prize winners from each category have the opportunity to be awarded Environment Canterbury's prestigious Wrybill Trophy.

For more information contact:

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TIPS for your Science Fair Investigation

See if you can match the descriptions. Draw arrows to link them. We've done the first one for you.

Choose a topic that has a problem and needs a solution

When something fails, figure out what you could have done differently and don't be afraid to try again!

Give yourself lots of time

Get your information from lots of different sources. Books, media and the internet are not enough. Talk to lots of different people, including family, friends and experts, and get lots of opinions.

Research

You can never do enough testing. Try doing your experiment on different days, at different times and in different places.

Test, retest and then test again

To test your findings and ideas for solutions you may need several months, so get started early.

Make good records of your work

Good science is about finding out what the problems are and testing new ways to solve them.

Try, try again

Record everything you do in a log book, so that you can refer back to your methods. Take photos or sketches as you work.



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Metroinfo Christchurch	03 366 8855
Businfo Timaru	03 688 5544
Pollution hotline (inside Christchurch)	03 366 4663 (24 hours)
Pollution hotline (outside Christchurch)	0800 76 55 88 (24 hours)
Civil defence	03 366 2359
River and flood infoline (charges apply)	0900 74837
River report	www.ecan.govt.nz/riverreport
Latest riverflows	www.ecan.govt.nz/riverflows
Didymo emergency hotline	0800 809 966

Ballance Farm Environment Awards Canterbury:

Temuka arable farmers Nick and Michelle Ward (pictured) won the Supreme Award at the 2009 Canterbury Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

Environment Canterbury's Water Efficiency Award went to Michael and Angela Chaffey, Rakaia.

Other award-winning farmers were:

- PGG Wrightson Land and Life Award
Ben Todhunter and Donna Field, Rakaia Gorge.
- Silver Fern Farms Livestock Award
Colin and Hilary Guild, Rakaia Gorge.
- NZ Farm Environment Award Trust Habitat Improvement Award
John Harrington, Te Mania Livestock, Cheviot.
- LIC Dairy Farm Award
John and Robyn Faulkner, Culverden.



For more information on the Awards, visit www.ecan.govt.nz/bfea, or contact the regional co-ordinator on 03 353 9711, or email bfea@ecan.govt.nz

Water Strategy moves closer

The Canterbury Water Management Strategy, the long-term plan for management of the region's water, is getting closer with a final draft strategy due for completion by the end of October. The final round of public consultation has just been finished. Updates on the strategy will continue to be available on the website:

www.canterburywater.org.nz



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