

CLEAN HEAT – AN AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FOR THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

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The Clean Heat Project has been developed as a result of new rules for home heating proposed in the air chapter of the Proposed Canterbury Natural Resources Regional Plan. The focus is on meeting the 2013 National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NESAQ), in particular, the air quality limit for particulate matter.

The consequence of not reducing air pollution will have significant impacts not only on health but also on industry growth, the quality of social services provided for Christchurch people, and ultimately people's standard of living. Not meeting this standard will significantly limit the ability to issue new resource consents to industry for discharge into the air after 2013.

Through the Clean Heat Project, Environment Canterbury provides incentives and assistance to assist homeowners in Christchurch using solid fuels for home heating to change to cleaner forms of heating and to upgrade home energy efficiency. The aim of the project is to assist the conversion of at least 26,000 homes over an 11-year period from 01 February 2003. The Clean Heat project has raised awareness of the negative health effects of pollution and the acceptance of the role the community plays in domestic solid fuel heating.

Alternative heating appliances that are considered to be Clean Heat Approved are offered to participants and consist of a range of technologies and fuel types in reflection of Christchurch airshed capacity. Selection of such appliances by participants must be balanced with an approximate 60% of conversions to be of very little to no emissions (electrical, gas, diesel heating appliances) with the remaining 40% available for ultra-low emission solid fuel burning appliances.

This paper reviews the project since inception to where it is in 2007 and examines whether in Christchurch there will need to be an increase in the conversion rate whilst maintaining airshed capacity through voluntary conversions or other mechanisms in order to meet the 2013 deadline.