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Healthy Rotorua Homes



Horace Pehi emerges from under a newly insulated home.

A Healthy Homes project in Rotorua providing free insulation to selected homes is also providing work for Work and Income clients.

The project is helping families who own their pre-1977 homes, have a history of respiratory problems and who are eligible for Community Services Card.

One of 12 clients now in work because of the project is Horace Pehi. After six months on Unemployment Benefit, Horace was referred by Rotorua Work Broker Anne Hughes to a trainee insulator vacancy with Energy Options, the company contracted to insulate the homes.

Horace completed Energy Options' four week training programme in one week and then joined the Rotorua Healthy Homes project crew. Within three weeks he was promoted to team leader and is now responsible for four workers.

He says people have been very appreciative of the work the crew does. But he didn't realise the difference insulation can make to a home. "Hearing that a warm house has meant people aren't sick any more or knowing children aren't spending as much time in hospital, makes crawling around under floors and in tight ceiling spaces worthwhile," he says.

Insulation crews have so far worked in 111 homes. They have installed a polyester product called Novatherm under floors and in ceilings, fitted brush strips underneath doors to reduce drafts and where necessary wrapped hot water cylinders.

The Rotorua Healthy Homes Project is a partnership between Work and Income, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), Rotorua District Council, Health Rotorua, Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust, Lakes District Health Board and the Bay of Plenty Community Trust.

For more information contact:

Public Relations Advisor Julie Hill 07 921 8005.

City Cares For Trainees



Dylan McKenzie and Rebecca Follas clear a hedgerow as part of their parks and reserves rotation.

Ten unemployed young people from across the Western Bay of Plenty are gaining hands-on experience in a variety of trades with City Care – a construction, maintenance and management company.

City Care looks after New Zealand's infrastructure and amenity assets in Canterbury, Tauranga, Auckland, Otorohanga and New Plymouth.

Work and Income referred the young people to City Care in March.

As well as moving through a series of placements in eight trades over a 12 month period, the trainees are receiving additional mentoring and training in related areas like roading, underground services and horticulture. At the end of the 12 months it is expected the trainees will move into an apprenticeship.

For 21 year olds Dylan McKenzie and Rebecca Follas, City Care has provided opportunities they would not have otherwise had. Both left school at 16 and had a variety of jobs before becoming unemployed. Dylan and Rebecca are now working their way around the various trades and have already decided where they see their futures.

Dylan wants to do an apprenticeship with the waste water division while Rebecca would like to complete a mechanical apprenticeship.

Tauranga Work Broker Helen Young says City Care's pre-apprenticeship programme is delivering positive outcomes for youth. "I'm really excited about bringing the next group of young people on in February 2006 when this group is in apprenticeships!"

She says a strong relationship has developed between City Care and Work and Income. "The programme works because of the support we provide to each other and to the trainees."

*For more information contact:
Tauranga Work Broker
Helen Young 07 928 8347.*

Enterprising Communities Encouraged



Community Development Manager Tuahu Watene (seated) and his team from left to right: Linda Spafford, Gerry Brons, Annie Ross and Diane Bradshaw.

Helping communities to create job opportunities in the Bay of Plenty is the role of the newly created Work and Income Enterprising Communities team.

Enterprising Communities Advisors Linda Spafford, Diane Bradshaw, Gerry Brons and Industry Partnership Advisor Annie Ross are led by Labour Development Manager Tuahu Watene.

Enterprising Communities grants are available to help community organisations develop and implement projects that will create work opportunities and up-skill people who are traditionally disadvantaged in the labour market. Projects need to target the priority groups identified in Work and Income's Bay of Plenty annual regional plan. These plans can be accessed at www.workandincome.govt.nz

To be eligible for funding, a project needs to be managed by a legally incorporated, non profit organisation. Projects are considered on a case by case basis.

The Enterprising Communities team is keen to hear from Bay of Plenty community groups and industries who are interested in creating local employment.

Linda Spafford is responsible for the South Waikato, Taupo, Turangi and Murupara areas, while Diane Bradshaw looks after Tauranga, Rotorua and Te Puke. Gerry Brons looks after Eastern Bay of Plenty. Annie Ross looks after employers and organisations looking at industry specific training options.

For more information contact:

Public Relations Advisor Julie Hill 07 921 8005 or julie.hill007@msd.govt.nz. The regional plan is also available from Julie.

Bay of Plenty Unemployment Levels Fall



Regional Commissioner for Social Development Carl Crafar says the Bay of Plenty region now has the fifth lowest rates of unemployment in the country.

Bay of Plenty's unemployment rate for the June quarter has fallen to 3.1% according to the latest Department of Statistics Household Labour Force Survey.

This compares to 4.9% for the same period in 2004 and 6.6% in June 2003.

As at June 2005, 4,150 clients were receiving an Unemployment Benefit. At the same time in 2004, 5,911 clients were receiving an Unemployment Benefit compared to 9,229 clients in June 2003 and 12,107 clients in June 1996.

Work and Income's Bay of Plenty Regional Commissioner for Social Development Carl Crafar says this is an outstanding result.

"The Bay of Plenty region now has the fifth lowest unemployment rates in the country. The region traditionally has a higher unemployment rate than the national average and therefore this drop in numbers is more noteworthy."

Carl says over the last 12 months Work and Income has focused on reducing unemployment levels across the Bay of Plenty by researching skill and labour shortages, partnering with industry to create opportunities for clients and working closely with the health sector to assist clients with disabilities.

"Partnering with stakeholders and communities to create local solutions and establishing new industry and employer relationships, will reduce this rate further," Carl says.

With a national unemployment rate of 3.7%, New Zealand currently has the lowest rate within the OECD.

For more information contact:

Public Relations Advisor Julie Hill 07 921 8005.