

Health and Safety

Your home environment has a major effect on the health and happiness of your family. That's why Future-Proofing your home for health and safety should be a priority. Innovations like mechanical filtered ventilation systems and anti-allergenic carpets help ensure you and your family are kept safe in your home.

Indoor Air Quality

Fresh air is essential to good health, but modern homes are almost effectively airtight and our busy lifestyles mean that there is a need for a natural indoor/outdoor air transfer. By choosing innovations such as a home ventilation system and flued gas heating, you can ensure your home is a fresh and dry place to live. Natural ventilation can be achieved by good design and by incorporating quality air flow through window design and joinery. Indoor air quality in existing homes can vary, obtaining a thermohydrograph (a scientific instrument that simultaneously records both temperature and relative humidity in graph form for a preset period of time) can help you understand the quality of your air.

Asthma and Allergy Prevention

New Zealand has one of the highest levels of asthma and allergy related illnesses in the world. Anti-allergenic carpets and underlay will help eradicate dust mites that can aggravate these allergies, and in combination with a ventilation system or a central vacuum system you can create a more healthy indoor environment.

Central vacuum systems have been independently tested and are proven to remove dirt, dust mites and allergens from the living environment to provide a measured, effective improvement for allergy and asthma sufferers.

Flued heating systems have been designed not to release emissions into the room they're heating. These are particularly beneficial for those with asthma or allergies, as they maintain the air quality of the home.

A healthy home is not just about indoor air quality, even the structure of your home can create healthy benefits. You can purchase washing machines with specifically designed allergy and asthma cycles that use hot washes

to decimate dust mites and bugs and lengthy rinses and a fast spin to remove all dust mite waste and traces of detergent. Matching dryers are also available with high heat allergy cycles. See our 'How To' guide for more information on FPB options.

Environmentally Friendly Paint

Even the parts of your home you take for granted, such as its paint, can have a drastic effect on the health of your family - especially young children and the elderly. Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) are chemicals that leach into the atmosphere and can cause respiratory and lung diseases. By choosing low VOC paint, you will be creating a home that is safer and non-toxic for your family, and also better for the environment.

Healthy Plumbing

It's often the hidden elements in your home that can have the biggest impact on your health. Future-Proof plumbing solutions include tapware and piping that is quieter, more thermally efficient and does not leach toxins into your drinking water. Tapware that is also de-zincified will provide quality drinking water. An anti-scald mechanism will only deliver water to a maximum preset temperature. When choosing your tapware and piping, ensure they meet the Australasian safety standards.

Home Heating, Insulation and Lighting

The World Health Organisation recommends an average year round indoor temperature of 18 degrees, however in New Zealand we have an average of 15 degrees. It doesn't help the fact that many New Zealand homes still have no in-built heating solution and no or poor insulation. By incorporating a heating system into your home you can keep warm and healthy throughout the year. An efficient heating solution coupled with an air ventilation system will ensure your home is a healthy, warm environment. The use of natural light has been proven to enhance mood experiences. A natural daylighting system

Tips:

- Consider designing your house so people don't walk through the kitchen to get to other parts of the house.
- Don't have sharp edges on bench tops and cabinets.
- Decking with grooves offers more grip.
- Choose carpet with thick underlay to cushion falls.
- Add natural light where possible.



allows for the transmission of daylight into rooms throughout your home. See the energy efficiency section on page five for more information.

A Safe Home for Families

Even with all these FPB innovations, accidents can still happen. Simple measures like non-slip tiles, non-slip decking and light switches at each end of a walk-through room can reduce the risk of injury. The bathroom and kitchen are the source of most household accidents, so ensuring that the kitchen is a safe place for children is important, as is using safety glass in bathrooms and other wet areas.

Poor lighting is a hazard causing many household

injuries. Sensor lights should be placed to illuminate access routes to the front and back door. Indoor areas such as the kitchen should have high light levels for detailed work and lights should be placed so you do not shadow the work bench.

Also look out for safety features on light fittings such as fire rated downlights and downlights with an automatic cut off switch if the fitting becomes dangerously hot and poses a risk of fire.

A domestic sprinkler system protects not only you and your loved ones, it protects the family home or bach. Response is immediate and will not cost the earth, they can easily be integrated into the plumbing system of the home, and come with modern flush mounted sprinkler heads that are not cosmetically noticed.