

Did you know?

IN THE REAL DEEP SOUTH

It's a fact: at 41.2o South, Wellington is the most southerly capital city on the planet. Cities on similar latitudes in the Northern hemisphere are Barcelona, Istanbul and Chicago.

OLD CARS

NZ roads don't need to be salted so cars rust very slowly.

Around a fifth of cars are less than seven years old.

Around two thirds of cars are between seven and 16 years old. Around a sixth of cars are more than 16 years old.

CAR CRAZY

With 2.5 million cars for four million people, including children, New Zealand's car ownership rate is one of the world's highest. New Zealanders make only about 2% of their journeys by bus and fewer than 1% by rail.

FATTY FOODS

For each person who lives here, New Zealand produces 100 kg of butter and 65 kg of cheese each year.

Insurance

Whether you're in your own home, about to purchase a new home, renting or flatting, everyone needs insurance. Without protection in case of theft, fire or other event, the impact of loss can be devastating. Take a minute to picture losing everything you own - including your furniture, appliances, clothing, entertainment systems and your home itself. With this in mind it isn't hard to realise just how important insurance is.

Different insurers offer varying levels of cover but generally with home insurance, your home will be protected against damage or destruction of your home (eg, by fire or water). Most insurers will offer two options: either a full replacement (with no regard to cost) or a replacement up to a specific cost.

Additional cover could include allowances for additional costs such as the necessity to rent elsewhere during repair or rebuild. Most insurers will offer bonuses such as protection against losing your no claims discount for glass breakages.

How much do I insure for?

Calculate the total value of all your belongings and your home itself. Start by taking a piece of paper from room to room; divide your paper into two columns listing each item, along with its value. This is the time to record the details of your belongings - write down exact product names, any identifiable marks or identification codes and even take photographs. Don't forget to step outside and count the BBQ and outdoor furniture and into the garage or tool shed.

You will probably be surprised at how much everything comes to in the final tally and realise the importance of this exercise. Once you have recorded your list, keep it in a safe location with a copy away from the property to access in case you need it.

When was the last time you updated your insurance?

Can I save some money?

There are many ways to reduce your premium, and these do differ between insurance providers, so talk to your insurer about suggestions

to help make your premium more manageable. Some common discounting options include installing a monitored security alarm, increasing your excess amount, combining car and business in a package deal and benefiting from a no claims discount.

What if I'm renting?

If you're currently renting you still need insurance. Not only do you stand to lose the value of your contents, but you also risk liability for accidental damage to the home you are living in. For example, in the event you



Make sure that saving money on insurance doesn't mean reducing your cover

accidentally burn your rental home to the ground, your landlord's insurer may come after you personally to recover the cost of the house itself. If you are not insured against this, you are not protected and could be found liable for damages in the hundreds of thousands.

Don't forget...

If you are renovating or building, talk to your insurer about a policy specific for your project - you may not be covered by a standard policy. If you are going away for a number of weeks, tell your insurer. It is also advisable to keep your insurer up to date with other information, such as a change in those residing at the property or any major new purchases.

When was the last time you updated your insurance and will your current cover replace everything you now own?

Now is a good time to talk to your insurer about your home and contents. Ask as many questions as possible, look at the fine print and get down to details like "If I discover a leaking tap has caused damage, will I be covered?" There will be many "didn't think of that" examples that a good insurer will be able to talk to you about. To avoid the disappointment of having a claim declined, be informed and prepared for securing cover that protects you and your home.

■ nailed.co.nz kindly contributed to the article