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Greens a step ahead with fire funds

The Green Party has pre-empted the cost to households of phasing out old and dirty fires in Napier and Hastings cities by providing a massive fund for insulation and clean heating.

“The \$1 billion Green Homes Fund secured by the Greens in Emissions Trading Scheme negotiations will result in much needed financial support to households in Napier and Hastings to improve air quality”, said Green Party Tukituki candidate Quentin Duthie.

Hawkes Bay Regional Council staff have recommended that the cities’ open fires be phased out by 2011 and old inefficient wood burners by 2013. This is necessary for the cities to meet air quality standards, and is estimated to cost \$40 million.

“Fortunately for Napier and Hastings residents, the Green Party’s \$1 billion dollar fund is designed for that exact purpose – to subsidise the installation of new efficient heating systems like clean burners, wood-pellet fires or heat pumps, and of course to insulate homes.”

“The Regional Council staff identified that the cost of this measure will fall most heavy on the poor and elderly, which is why the Greens ensured the fund favours the less well off, beneficiaries and pensioners, but remains accessible to everyone but the wealthiest.”

“I challenge the Hawkes Bay National Party MPs to confirm that National would retain the fund rather than take it away from the Napier and Hastings communities that need it.”

“It just goes to show that Green Party solutions are sensible from every angle: in this case, improving energy efficiency of home heating means better air quality, lower carbon emissions, warmer and drier houses, improving peoples’ health and saving money.”

A report last year calculated that air pollution contributes to 1,100 cases of people dying earlier than they would have otherwise, as well as numerous other negative health effects, costing an estimated \$1.14 billion per year.

The Havelock North-made Pyroclassic is a great local example of a super-efficient fire.

“I hope that one day my enduring childhood memory of waking up in an uninsulated bedroom on countless frosty Otane mornings becomes a thing of the past. Green ideas mean comfortable homes while reducing air pollution and emissions, and improving public health.”

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