

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kiwis cutting back on heating bills as winter sets in

Kiwis are piling on the jerseys and duvets as increasing power prices drive almost two thirds of us to cut back on home heating, Research New Zealand polling shows.

The poll found that 64 percent of Kiwis are consciously cutting back on heating as the winter begins to set in. A further 28 percent said they weren't cutting back and seven percent said they didn't use electricity or gas at all for heating, but used an alternative such as wood.

Research New Zealand director Emanuel Kalafatelis said the poll was further evidence of how the increasing cost of living was hitting Kiwis hard.

"People are trying to make savings where they can but it seems they're not just cutting back on luxuries but necessities too, like heating. When a First Division Lotto winner says the great thing about her win is she no longer has to worry about affording her power bill you know times are tough.

Mr Kalafatelis said households from lower annual income brackets were more likely to be cutting back on heating than those in a higher income bracket. Of households earning less than \$40,000 or between \$40,000 and \$69,900 per annum, 68% and 69% were cutting back, compared to 55% of those in households earning more than \$70,000 annually.

The poll follows a warning from Community Energy Action in The Press this week that about half a million Kiwis are experiencing 'fuel poverty', meaning they need to spend more than 10% of their total household income to adequately heat their home.

Research New Zealand polling was conducted between 14 April and 23 May.

The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between the 14 and 23 May. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.6 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organisation but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.



Participants were asked: *Given the cost of power is increasing, are you consciously cutting back on heating?*

Table 1: Cutting back on heating by household income

Given the cost of power is increasing, are you consciously cutting back on heating?

| | Total | Under \$40,000 | 40,000 - \$69,999 | \$70,000 plus | Don't know/refused |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Base = | 500 | 186 | 112 | 154 | 48 |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Yes | 64 | 68 | 69 | 55 | 63 |
| No | 28 | 25 | 25 | 35 | 25 |
| Do not use electricity or gas for heating (eg use wood or pellets) | 7 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 11 |
| Don't know | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 2: Cutting back on heating by age group

Given the cost of power is increasing, are you consciously cutting back on heating?

| | Total | 15 to 29 | 30 to 39 | 40 to 49 | 50 to 59 | 60+ |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----|
| Base = | 500 | 94 | 87 | 97 | 101 | 121 |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Yes | 64 | 62 | 64 | 64 | 62 | 68 |
| No | 28 | 31 | 29 | 22 | 32 | 27 |
| Do not use electricity or gas for heating (eg use wood or pellets) | 7 | 5 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 5 |
| Don't know | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

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