



# The Good Guide

GOOD RENOVATIONS

**There are many reasons to believe that renovation is the home building of the future. From walls to floors to warmth, this supplement will arm you with the product knowledge to help you renovate in a way that makes both dollars and sense**

**I**t's often been said that the house with the least environmental impact is the one that never gets built. When you take into account the materials, labour, and machinery use which goes into every property, it's difficult to justify the 'push it over and start again' approach unless the existing place is genuinely a hovel.

With credit being a touch harder to come by these days, there's also a justifiably cautious atmosphere in the housing market. People just aren't moving about as much, so there are fewer good houses for sale, so people aren't moving so much, and so on.

Meanwhile, it's all about location, location, location and they ain't making more land unless you live in Dubai. This means it's getting less and less likely that your dream spot is a bare section awaiting your vision. Anyway, are you really sure that old house won't become a classic in years to come? (Remember the once grungy suburb of Ponsonby?)

Living in an old home does not mean your lifestyle has to be old fashioned. There are now hundreds of environmentally aware firms out there and thousands of products specifically designed for the eco-conscious retrofitter, all ready to transform the dowdiest old villa into a cutting edge eco-adode. And on some key items, like solar hot water heating, the government may even help cover some of the cost. So these products are particularly worth pursuing, even if you are renting (see page 75).

The key is to find out exactly what shape your house is in. The 'I want a wind turbine' approach doesn't make a lot of sense

if your house is so cold and inefficient that you have the power needs of Eden Park on match night. Similarly, there's no point installing a state-of-the-art solar hot water system if your pipes have more leaks than a Welsh supermarket. Whether you are buying a home or taking stock of what you've got, it may be a wise investment to get a sympathetic professional to really go through the place. It's amazing what you can miss on your own, especially if you have been deliberately ignoring it for some time.

Once you have a full report on your home, you can set the priorities and make a plan to match your budget. The potential pitfall here is the temptation to skimp on quality to get as much done as possible. Of course you want to get all those home design niggles sorted in one hit. However, unless the condition of your home is endangering your health or investment, it's probably better for both the environment and your long-term finances to do a few things really well than lots of things badly. Otherwise you may end up covering the house with cheap options that you will have to redo in a few short years time.

In the following pages we showcase some top products with eco-credentials we respect. They cover quality quick fixes and finishing touches, including wool carpet from Cavalier Bremworth and paints from Resene, to a more fundamental project, solar water heating from Rinnai. Whatever you choose to do, look out for labels like Environmental Choice New Zealand and companies that work to ISO standards. This means they keep their house in order, as well as yours.

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# Paint the town green? Resene's got it covered

**When it comes to paint, Resene's eco-credentials are hard to beat. This Kiwi company has been surfing ahead of the great green wave for some time**

Resene introduced waterborne paint to New Zealand in the 1950s and removed the lead from its decorative paints in the late 1960s. It joined the Environmental Choice programme in 1996 and in 2004 set up Resene PaintWise, collecting unwanted paint and paint packaging from consumers for reuse, recycling and safe disposal. Resene gives free paint to Keep New Zealand Beautiful and other community groups to cover graffiti, and its latest Resene Zylone Sheen paint variant is VOC free.

**“Just as our customers call New Zealand home, so do we. It's central to our way of operating that we continuously strive to reduce the adverse effects of paint on the environment”**

— Resene managing director, Nick Nightingale

For Resene, all this is just an extension of what the company has been up to since 1946. The company exists to make paints that meet and exceed the exacting standards of professionals, and sensible professionals are the first to appreciate the benefits of reducing the health risks involved in their work.

As paint ingredients have become identified as causing concerns for health, Resene has immediately put into place research to identify safer paint ingredients.

The history of paint is as fascinating as it was dangerous. Less than a century ago, going for a vibrant vermilion paint, (orangey red to most of us) in your bedroom, would mean slapping pigments made from a mercury compound all over your walls. This

kind of long-term, low-level exposure has been associated with fatigue, irritability, loss of memory, vivid dreams, and depression—not really what you want in a night's sleep!

Paint manufacturing has certainly come a long way since then, with toxic substances such as mercury, arsenic and more recently, lead, no longer acceptable as ingredients in paint. Recently attention has focused on the effect of volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions on our environment. It is estimated by the Paint Quality Institute that ten percent of the ozone depleting substances in the

urban United States are a direct result of VOC emissions from surface coatings, including many standard household paints.

Solventborne paints release significantly more VOCs per litre than waterborne paints. But trim, joinery and wet areas were traditionally no-go zones for waterborne paints. They had a tendency to soften under prolonged exposure to moisture and for the paint to stick to itself when two painted surfaces came into contact. Resene's introduction of waterborne enamels in 1996 changed all that. Within five years they were outselling their solventborne equivalents, and new paints are still being added to this range.

Now Resene has gone one better, with low odour Resene Zylone Sheen VOC

Free paint, as well as pioneering non-VOC tinters enabling a full spectrum of colours without these emissions. Today, less than eight percent of the decorative paint sold by Resene is solventborne. Meanwhile the average per litre VOC levels of decorative paint sales sold by Resene, have dropped by over 90 percent in the last two decades.

“Just as our customers call New Zealand home, so do we,” says Nick Nightingale, Resene managing director. “It's central to our way of operating that we continuously strive to reduce the adverse effects of paint on the environment. Choose to specify and use Environmental Choice NZ products wherever you can and help us keep the environment green. Look for the EC logo on our product data sheets and paint containers—it is confirmation that the product meets the requirements of the Environmental Choice NZ programme.”

These days Resene can offer an environmental choice for almost every painting situation, without the need to sacrifice quality and product performance. The quality of the tinters and tones allows the same spectrum of colours to be supplied for both interior and exterior use, with most colours requiring only two topcoats to cover. The quality of the paint is also an environmental credential, since there's no point applying an inferior product, even if it is environmentally friendly, if it doesn't last.

Resene's Cool Colour technology, for example, improves the durability and performance of the paint by enabling it to reflect heat that would normally be absorbed. This increases the paint's life span, and



Resene's paints helped put the finishing touch to Peregrin Beach home in Queensland (top left), The Wharf (top right) and Yealand's Estate (bottom right). The PaintWise scheme is backed by Resene's managing director Nick Nightingale (bottom left)



reduces the need for air cooling in the building in the summer months.

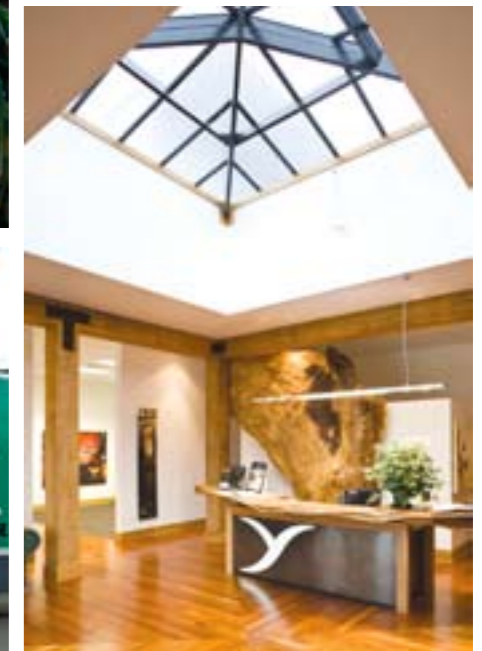
All Resene products are manufactured under a quality system certified as complying with ISO 9001. Most Resene Environmental Choice NZ products are approved by the Australian Paint Approvals Scheme (APAS) and a selection of Resene products also have Good Environmental Choice Australia approval.

Resene has been awarded a Trailblazer

- Large & Corporate Business Award at the Sustainable Business Network - National Awards, a Green Gold Award and the Resene PaintWise service has won a Business Environmental Leadership Award in the ARC Environmental Awards, an Award for Excellence in the Environmental Packaging Awards and a Green Ribbon award.

Like I said, they have the credentials.

Oh, and remember, when you are done with paint, don't leave it out where it could



get spilled. Resene's PaintWise programme collects unwanted paint and packaging. The waterborne paints are given to community groups to repaint their premises, while the metal cans and solvents are recycled.

To find out about Resene paints, call 0800-737-363 (0800-RESENE), email [advice@resene.co.nz](mailto:advice@resene.co.nz) or visit [www.resene.co.nz](http://www.resene.co.nz)

# A gentler footprint

**Wool carpet has a head start in the sustainability stakes—it's made from a natural fibre, farmed from a sustainable resource and the whole product, backing and all, is biodegradable**

Cavalier Bremworth has been making wool carpets since 1959. But half a century of experience doesn't seem to have made them complacent. Some 50 year olds might be a bit cynical about the whole green thing. But in 2006 Cavalier Bremworth was awarded Environmental Choice NZ accreditation and became the first company in the world to gain an internationally recognised eco-label across its entire wool carpet range. Shortly afterwards it gained the equivalent accreditation in Australia from Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA).

wool carpet was used in the first 4-star Green Star Office refurbishment project at 92 Albert Street in Auckland. The same carpet was also chosen for the recently completed Club Tower in Christchurch—the first five star green building in the South Island.

And Cavalier Bremworth has ISO 14001 accreditation and was a founding member of the New Zealand Green Building Council.

All this was not just some paper shuffling exercise. With the product 100 percent designed and made in New Zealand, and all the company's plants based in the North Island, transport energy costs were already

and processes were introduced into the firm's dyeing and spinning mills in Napier and Wanganui.

But to return to where we came in, all this has built on the fact that these people just know carpet, and know that not all carpets are created equal. Basically there's got to be few better tests of quality in a sustainable product than walking around all over it for years.

Cavalier Bremworth's reputation for producing high quality, premium carpets, is built on the knowledge of how costly cheap carpets can turn out to be, both for you and for the environment. Quick 'do-up' homes for sale in recent years have seen a lot of low quality, cheap carpet installed. It looked great on the day of the open home but hasn't lasted the distance. New owners, disappointed with how it is performing, are faced with replacing a carpet that should have lasted significantly longer. Disposing of old carpet only adds more waste to already bulging landfills.

That's why Cavalier Bremworth

recommends investing in quality carpet, preferably graded Extra Heavy duty. This gives you more wool per square cm than a lower grade carpet. This means it looks better, feels better, and lasts significantly longer. It also will help lower those heating bills. Studies have shown some homes have saved as much as 12 percent with wool carpet when there are temperature differences between the indoor air and that under the floor.

And the health benefits of wool carpet don't stop at the end of your cosy warm toes. A good quality wool carpet helps to regulate the humidity and improve the air quality in your home. Wool naturally absorbs moisture when the atmosphere is damp and releases it when the atmosphere is dry. It traps airborne particles which can be damaging to asthmatics and those with respiratory problems. And it filters out volatile organic compounds (VOCs)—unwanted toxins and odours that can cause irritation to humans.

Speaking of irritations—sometimes people's real footprints can be as disruptive as their ecological ones, if they are tramping round your house and you can hear every single one. Wool carpet virtually eliminates floor impact noise produced by footfalls, chairs scraped across the floor and objects dropped.

Cavalier Bremworth acknowledges how hard it can be to dispose of unwanted carpet, so it gives a full run down on its website of all the ways you can recycle it, instead of sending it to landfill. In the last year, the company itself has given nearly five kilometres of uplifted waste carpet as weed matting squares to schools and councils. Studies commissioned from AgResearch have proven

that carpet is a superb weed mat material, aiding the retention of soil moisture, boosting plant growth and suppressing weeds.

Pakuranga Heights School did some trial planting with the carpet weed mats and found it out-performed their other weed mat substances (including a commercially bought one) in terms of bio-activity under the soil, weed suppression and moisture retention.

And Cavalier Bremworth is constantly looking at ways to reduce its own footprint,

not just in its manufacturing processes but right across the company in terms of energy efficiency, waste recycling and further exploration into environmentally positive uses for unwanted carpet.

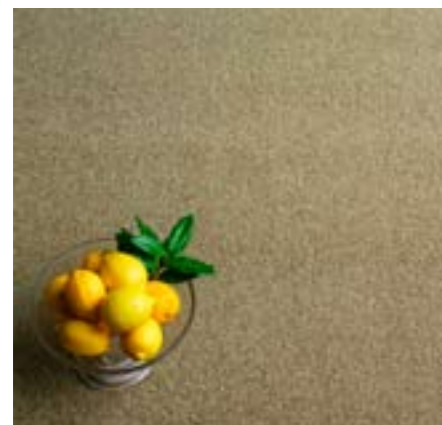
This is carpet which supports you and works with the Earth, sometimes literally.

*To find out more about Cavalier Bremworth or find your nearest warranted dealer, go to [www.cavbrem.co.nz](http://www.cavbrem.co.nz)*

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This means their carpets gain maximum credit points in the Green Star Office Design rating tools used by architects to create environmentally friendly commercial buildings. A Cavalier Bremworth broadloom

pretty minimal. But the company upgraded its Napier wool scouring facility to reduce water usage and improve the quality of wastewater discharge. Biodegradable detergents were introduced and much friendlier treatments



# Want reliable hot water? Go with the flow

Rinnai is now taking its advanced heating technology to your roof

**H**ot water running out on you is a problem so many households face, and it can be so frustrating! From teenagers who demand lengthy showers through to washing all those football socks for budding All Blacks, the laundry and bathroom require what can sometimes seem to be an impossible amount of hot water. And when the hot water does run out, doesn't it seem to be just before you finally get to have a long shower or relaxing bath?

But rethinking your hot water system can seem like a daunting task, so it helps to deal with a company with a proven track

record. Rinnai has been at the cutting edge of the heating industry since its creation in 1920, with numerous breakthrough products and heating systems. Now that research and development prowess has been channelled into the development of its super-efficient hot water heating range.

These systems are also solar-enabled, offering a flexible solution for those wanting to upgrade to solar in the future

About one-third of your power bill goes on heating hot water, so anyone planning a sustainable renovation should consider

revamping their system. The best time to do this is when you are refitting your kitchen or bathroom. This will allow easy access to pipe work and enable you to install your new equipment close to where you need it most.

This is particularly true if you are making the transition to solar hot water heating.

Rinnai's cutting edge solar systems are a testament to the way in which the company stays ahead of the curve. The company has simplified the rigmarole of choosing separate solar panels, tanks and piping, by creating several comprehensive systems. Each system comes in three sizes with components that are carefully designed to work well together. You can easily work out which one you need using the company's online solar calculator at [www.rinnai.co.nz](http://www.rinnai.co.nz).

Obviously not all of us are ready to make the leap to solar, and even those who are will almost certainly need some back up, especially through the winter months. So Rinnai offers gas and electric systems that work brilliantly on their own, with options that are ready to plug straight into a solar system if and when the time comes.

Here's where Rinnai's experience in fine-tuning gas heating systems really comes into its own. Their Continuous Flow systems ignite electronically and heat cold water as it passes through the unit to your desired temperature. And they can heat as much water as you need, continuously.

The Continuous Flow systems are designed to flick on automatically when hot water is desired, meaning you get

hassle free continuous supply, but stay off when it's not, to keep things efficient. The latest incarnation, the Rinnai Efficiency, also captures heat from the gas exhaust to preheat the cold water flowing into it, so reducing fuel use even further.

These systems are ideal in situations where you don't want any disruptions in supply.

And Rinnai's electric tank hot water systems provide traditional hot water cylinders with a range of features and options that many New Zealand homes are not used to. For a start, Rinnai's electric tanks are solar-enabled, offering a flexible solution for those wanting to upgrade to solar in the future. You can start by installing the tank, then it is a simple process to add solar panels and controllers at a later date. In an era where everyone is trying to save precious resources, and in an economic environment as uncertain as the current one, it is reassuring to know your hot water system is as efficient and flexible as it can be.

They're also made with good looking Colour Bond exteriors. This means they look good enough to be installed out in the open, without having to worry about hiding them away in a cupboard, a real bonus for those short on space. Alternatively, they can also be installed inside for those homes where an inside tank is preferred.

Rinnai has been creating efficient heating systems for almost 90 years. Now, when resources are increasingly scarce and the economics of heating under scrutiny, it's a good time to benefit from Rinnai's experience in home heating.

To find out more about Rinnai visit [www.rinnai.co.nz](http://www.rinnai.co.nz)



Rinnai's systems can be upgraded to include solar panels. The super-efficient hot water range builds on Rinnai's 90-year heritage



Capture the heat: The Rinnai Efficiency unit preheats cold water using heat from the exhaust