

# Leaky homes not going away



Amy McGillivray

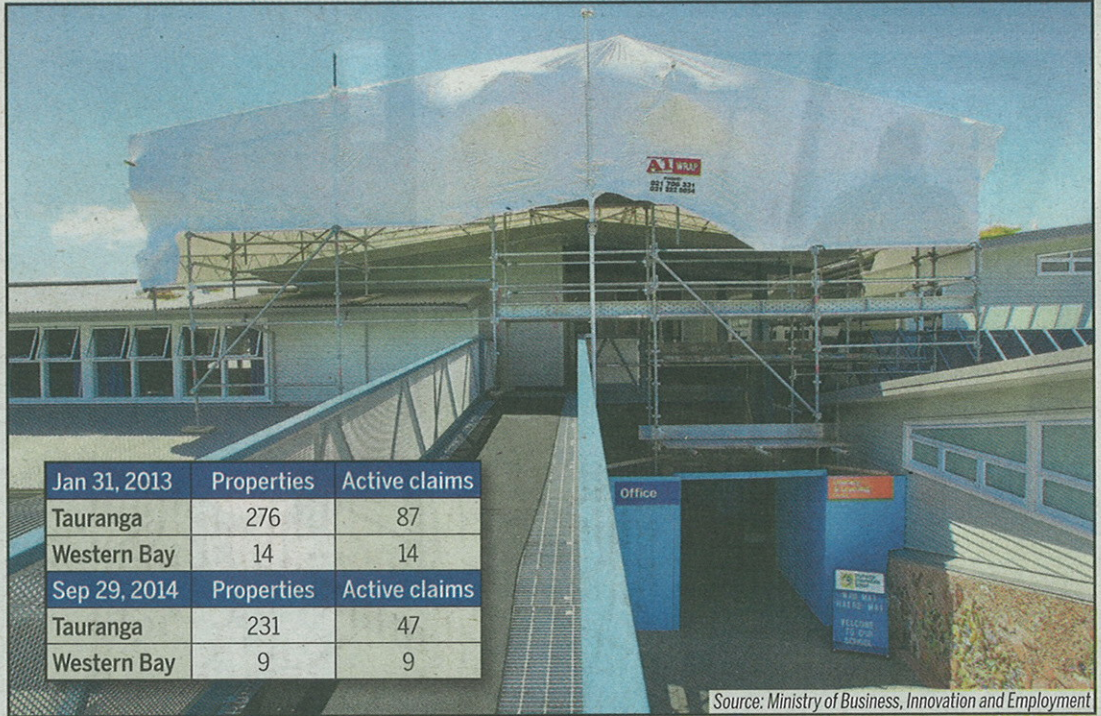
**T**HE number of active leaky-home claims lodged with the Government may be dropping, but Western Bay home owners and buyers are being warned it does not mean the issue is going away.

In the Tauranga City Council area, as at September 29, 231 properties had 47 active claims lodged with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) Weathertight Homes Resolution Service — down from 276 properties with 87 active claims in January 2013.

In the Western Bay of Plenty District Council area the numbers had also dropped from 14 properties with 14 claims at the start of last year to nine properties and nine claims last month.

An MBIE spokesman said the figures were for active, open claims which were seeking a resolution through either the Financial Assistance Package, Weathertight Tribunal or the courts. Claims could be closed for several reasons including the property being repaired or sold.

Tauranga barrister and leaky homes specialist Nathan Smith said he believed the figures reflected more people



Jan 31, 2013	Properties	Active claims
Tauranga	276	87
Western Bay	14	14
Sep 29, 2014	Properties	Active claims
Tauranga	231	47
Western Bay	9	9

Source: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Email: [editor@bayofplentytimes.co.nz](mailto:editor@bayofplentytimes.co.nz)

missing out on Government assistance rather than a drop in the number of leaky homes needing repairs. "There's the 10-year time limit so for someone to be eligible now their house has to have been completed after 2004 and most houses were completed before that," he said.

Even now leaky homes were a huge problem in Tau-

ranga, particularly for those who were not eligible for assistance, he said.

"There are still in my view many leaky homes out there. It's just that they are having to deal with it themselves and that's why they are not showing up on the MBIE stats."

Many people still did not know they were living in a leaky home, Mr Smith said.

He was currently working with clients who only discovered their house was leaky when they hired a painter to repaint their home and repairs were going to cost

\$1 million. Mr Smith said it was important for potential buyers to get a pre-purchase inspection as details of leaks did not have to be included on the property file unless they had applied to the MBIE for an assessor's report.

There were also several apartments in the region that were leaky but most owners were aware of the problem, he said.

With apartment sales picking up Lyon O'Neale Arnold director Mike O'Neale warned potential buyers to do their homework.