

LESS SPACE, MORE STYLE - TINY HOUSE LIVING MAGAZINE!

TINY LIVING



MAY 2023 | ISSUE 03



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More progress in NZ to legalise tiny house living

LEGALIZING THE DREAM

HOW THE NZ TINY HOUSE ASSOCIATION IS BREAKING BARRIERS FOR TINY HOMES ON WHEELS

The tiny house movement is gaining momentum around the world, and New Zealand is no exception. However, the industry has faced a significant hurdle in the form of legal inconsistencies around tiny houses on wheels. Fortunately, the New Zealand Tiny House Association (NZTHA) is working on a solution to address this issue.

The NZTHA is taking a two-pronged approach to tackle the problem of legal inconsistencies for tiny homes on wheels. First, the association is collaborating with the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment (MBIE) to develop an Acceptable Building Solution for tiny homes on wheels. This solution, once approved by MBIE, would guarantee compliance with the Building Code for any tiny house built to the Acceptable Building Solution for tiny homes on wheels

Second, the NZTHA is facilitating a working group between the association and New Zealand councils to establish a national permit system for tiny homes on wheels on private land.

This system would recognise the temporary nature of tiny homes on wheels, allowing owners to apply for a permit and pay a fee similar to a vehicle registration fee. This approach accommodates the nomadic style of tiny house living and land lease scenarios while also contributing to infrastructure costs and ensuring community safety through an affordable pay-as-you-go model.

The Acceptable Building Solution and the permit system will provide a complete solution that councils throughout New Zealand can choose to adopt and use. This will help develop consistency throughout the country, instead of each council using a different approach.

Rebecca Mclean, Founder and Director of Tiny House Builders Ltd, and Chairperson of the New Zealand Tiny House Association, and Sharla May, Co-founder and Officer of the New Zealand Tiny House Association, Founder and Director of the Tiny House Hub, Tiny House Expo, Tiny House Awards, Tiny Living Magazine, and Landshare, are leading this effort from the NZTHA.

The NZTHA has visited several district councils to speak with them about the legal issues facing tiny homes on wheels and how they can make changes to their district plans and processes to improve things. The association has invited all councils to participate in their national working group and work together to establish a permit system for tiny homes on wheels on private land.

This is an exciting and positive step for the tiny house community. Bringing not only hope and security but consistency and protection across the board.

Tiny homes are a unique, affordable and sustainable housing option. Progress from the NZTHA shows that regulators are beginning to recognise this. We're now one step closer to getting legal consistency across the country.

Follow the NZTHA on facebook to stay up to date with progress. There'll be opportunities for public submissions at various stages. You're welcome to participate, so keep an eye out for the opportunity to have your say.

The NZTHA is volunteer led, so please consider joining as a member to support this work.

To support the voluntary work of the NZTHA please consider becoming a member for as little as \$30 per year.

[Join now](#) >





Don't get ripped off:

Legal considerations when purchasing a tiny house



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When buying a tiny house or engaging a builder to build a tiny house, it is very important to carry out some basic checks to confirm that good title can be transferred to you upon payment for the tiny house. Buying a tiny house is a significant investment and just as you would check for security over a car, you should also do the same for your tiny house.

Buying an Existing Tiny House

When buying an existing tiny house, you will need to consider the type of tiny house you are buying, which will have an impact on the checks you carry out. Firstly, you will need the following basic information from the vendor:

- (a) The vendor's full legal name. If the vendor is an individual, you should request to see their personal identification (i.e. driver's licence) to confirm their full legal name. If the vendor is a company, the full legal name should be checked online at Companies Office; and
- (b) If the tiny house is registered as a vehicle with the New Zealand Transport Agency, you should obtain the registration number for the vehicle and confirm the vendor is the owner.

Once you have this information, you can carry out checks to see if there is any security registered over the tiny house that indicates there may be some money owing to a creditor. The first check is on the Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR). The PPSR is effectively an online publicly available notice board where creditors can register a claim to personal property and therefore interested persons can check if there is any debt or obligation attached to the goods that they wish to buy.

Searching the PPSR for claims over personal property (called security interests) is cheap to do on the PPSR. Once you have the above basic information, you can go to the PPSR website and carry out the following checks:

(a) Type in the details of the vendor's full name (either as an individual or organisation) and search what security interests have been registered against the vendor; and

(b) Type in the registration number for the vehicle to see whether any security interests have been registered against the vehicle.

"Buying a tiny house is a significant investment and just as you would check for security over a car, you should also do the same for your tiny house."

If either of these searches shows results that indicate that a secured party has an interest in the tiny house (called a financing statement), then you are on notice to discuss this security interest with the vendor and confirm that this will be removed as part of the settlement payment that you will make. Interpreting financing statements and whether they cover a tiny house can be difficult so we recommend you get your lawyer to advise you.

Not all tiny houses are classified as vehicles and some may be attached to land. In those circumstances, it is also important to carry out a search of the title to the land at Land Information New Zealand to confirm that the vendor is the owner and to see if a mortgage or other encumbrance has been registered against the title (which may secure the tiny house). You will need a lawyer to assist you with this search and if there are any mortgages or other encumbrances registered over the land on which the tiny house is situated, you are again on notice to request that the vendor obtain confirmation from the mortgagee that their security over the tiny house will be released upon payment of the settlement amount.

NEW

Check your builder

Protect your investment with a comprehensive builder report

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 **Tiny House Hub**



Buying a New Tiny House

If you are dealing with a new tiny house builder you should also consider the position regarding ownership of the tiny house whilst the tiny house is under construction. We would normally expect you will make staged payments to the tiny house builder for materials and when particular milestones are reached

Your contract should confirm that you own the tiny house as it is being constructed. In addition, we also recommend that you carry out checks on the PPSR in the tiny house builders name to see what security interests have been registered over the assets of the tiny house builder.

If there are security interests registered that could potentially cover the tiny house under construction, you then need to obtain comfort from those secured parties that their security will not cover your tiny house once you have made the staged payments. We recommend that you ask your lawyer to confirm this point and review the build contract.

Contract

This article summarises the checks and steps that need to be carried out when buying a tiny house. As it is a significant investment, and in addition to the above security checks, it is important that you have a robust written contract for the purchase of the tiny house, which will confirm the position around ownership and obtaining good title.

Andrew Skinner has over 20 years of experience as a commercial lawyer as well as being Vice Chair of the Frame and Truss Manufacturers Association.

This article is necessarily general in nature and is therefore not intended to be relied upon as legal advice.



TELL YOUR TINY STORY

Applications for 2023 speakers now open

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Sustainable living on the go:

A paramedic's guide to tiny home living

Craig Jones, a critical care paramedic with St John Ambulance Service, decided to downsize and live in a tiny house when he was offered an 18-month secondment to work on a Dunedin-based rescue helicopter. Craig wanted to avoid renting and explored sustainable living options, which led him to tiny-home living. "I wanted a house I could take with me at the end of my secondment period," Craig said.

The transition to tiny-home living was easy for him because he is a keen outdoor enthusiast and values a minimalist lifestyle. "I was basically only using a 16th of my 'real' 3-bedroom home, so not much of a transition," he added.

Craig designed and built his tiny home using structural insulated panels to construct small form factor buildings. He downscaled his dream house into a tiny home and created an architectural statement that didn't look like a square box tiny home.

Craig's tiny home has an open-plan living area that allows spaces to be reasonably flexible and not limited by built-in furniture. The under-stair storage and access to the mezzanine floor space provide innovative storage solutions, and ample kitchen storage comparable to a standard full-sized kitchen was included in the design. A key feature is the mobile drawer unit that provides the features of an "island-bench" but can be moved into the best position based on the task, food preparation vs additional bench space.

"I wanted a house I could take with me at the end of my secondment period"



Craig's tiny home has become a huge talking point, especially following his promotion on social media. Everyone wants to come and see it. Craig thinks it'll become a great space to entertain once it's on its own site. Being a shift-worker, it's a great place to get away from people, with the sound insulation qualities of SIPs to allow for sleep during the day.



Every decision during the design and construction phase of the tiny home had an environmental consideration. Craig used sustainable timber cladding, cork-based flooring, stainless steel benchtops, and the durability and longevity of the SIP structure. Even the fit-out resounds to this value, using a NZ-made wool mattress, water-saver tapware, and the complete avoidance of fossil-fuel appliances (instead opting for induction cooktop).

Due to the high insulative qualities, it's exceptionally easy to keep warm and uses less energy to do so.



Craig hasn't entertained guests in his tiny home yet, but the plan is to have a free-standing table that can be pulled from the wall to allow seating for five. The bifold windows and doors allow for great indoor-outdoor flow.

Living in a tiny home has encouraged Craig to live more simply and value aspects of life often overlooked, such as being grateful for the rain, knowing it will be his next shower or sitting on the deck in the sun reading a book.



Craig is planning to live in this tiny home until he designs and builds his next tiny home, which he already has in his head and incorporates learnings from this journey. He has purchased 3300m2 of protected native bush which is a continuation of the sustainability and conservation values that his tiny home is built around.

Craig's advice to someone considering the tiny home movement is to consider the end product early in the design, such as, how will you move your tiny home, especially if it's over 3.5t? Where will you park your tiny home and are you leasing or buying the land?



Are you living in a tiny house? We love to hear different perspective on tiny house living from those that are out there doing it.

[Share your story with us! - Click here to find out how](#)



Architecturally designed, Sustainable, cabins and tiny homes.

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WINTER IS COMING! ARE YOU READY?

Preparing your tiny house for winter: Four essential tips

The days are getting shorter, it's colder outside, and the solar panels aren't producing as much power anymore. We all know what this means; Winter is coming.

Even though most of New Zealand doesn't experience the extreme winters that people in other parts of the world have to deal with, it's still a good idea to do some basic winter prep to ensure you and your tiny house are ready for the colder season.

Here are four things you want to consider now to make sure winter in your tiny house will be enjoyable.

Keeping warm

Even if you're based in the so-called winterless north, chances are there will be some days when it will be freezing in your tiny without heating. And if you're further south, then reliable heating is a no-brainer.

Depending on your setup, you have several options. If you're on the grid, you can heat your tiny home like you would a normal house with a heat pump or electric heater. On the other hand, if you're off-grid, you will need a heating source that requires no or very little power. Wood fires are a popular option. However, if you don't have one installed yet, it's unlikely you will get it done in time for winter. Luckily, there are other options. For example, a diesel heater is generally easier to install than a fireplace. Electric blankets could also be an option, as they require relatively small amounts of power. In addition, thermal curtains are a great way to keep the heat you have inside and the cold outside.





"Dampness is actually your number one enemy, not the cold."

If you choose a heating option that requires some kind of fuel, like a wood fire or diesel heater, stock up before winter, so you don't run out in the middle of the coldest week of the year. Also, if you have a fireplace, now is the time to clean the firebox and flue.

It's also a good idea to do a test run of your heating source now, even if you don't technically need it yet. That way, you can identify any issues while you still have time to fix them.

Keeping dry

Keeping warm is probably the first thing people think about when preparing for winter. However, as many seasoned tiny house dwellers will tell you, dampness is actually your number one enemy, not the cold.

The combination of small spaces and people usually results in dampness. Just by breathing, cooking, showering and going about our lives, we add moisture to the air. In winter, we tend to get more rain which adds humidity and results in us bringing in wet gear into the tiny. It's also cold, so we tend to keep doors and windows closed, which means all that damp air is locked inside.

In a big house, that humid air spreads out, but in a tiny house, it doesn't have anywhere to go. And it's sneaky. You might not think your tiny home is particularly damp – until you find the summer clothes stored in the back of your closet have gone mouldy over winter.

How do you avoid this happening? Sorting out heating is step one. Step two is airing out your tiny house regularly. Whenever it's sunny in winter, your doors and windows should be open for a while.

Be extra vigilant about keeping shower steam in the bathroom, ideally in the shower itself with a shower dome. Running a dehumidifier daily in different parts of the house is also a good idea, and get into a habit of towelling off any windows with condensation on the cold mornings.

Also, be aware of spots most likely to get damp and check them regularly. If your mattress is on or close to the ground, check and air it regularly, and check the back of the closet and behind furniture that's backing right onto a wall.

If you find your tiny house gets very damp over winter despite these efforts, you might want to look into installing a proper ventilation system before the next winter. Many professional builders now recommend them as a default for new builds, as they have proven to make a big difference when it comes to managing dampness in a tiny home.

Keeping the batteries charged

If you're off-grid, the third biggest winter challenge after heating and keeping dampness at bay will probably be having enough power to keep the lights on (and everything else running). Not only are the days shorter in winter, but we also tend to get less sunshine, and the sun we do get is less intense. All this results in much less power generated by your solar system.

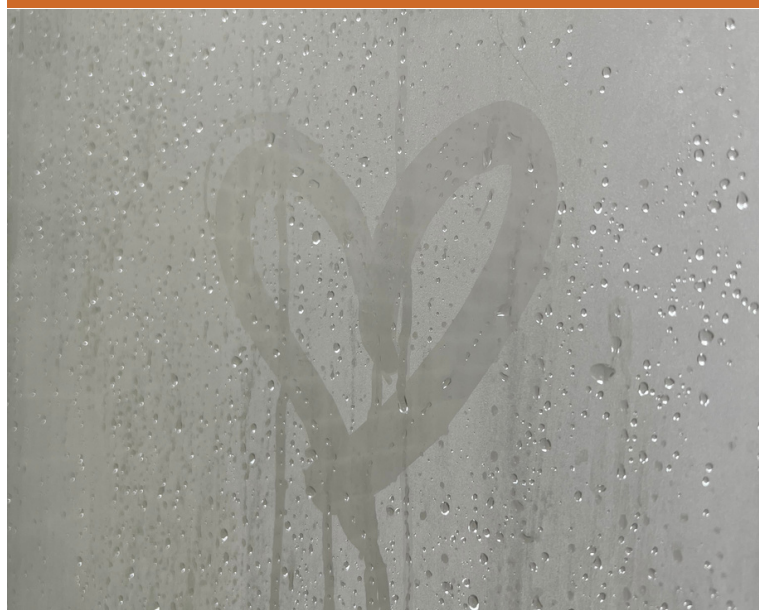
There are a few things you can do to maximise the output of your solar system. Start by running a complete check of your batteries and system now so you know of any potential issues before they can significantly impact you. If your batteries are nearing the end of their life, you might want to swap them out now, or at least be confident that you can get new batteries quickly when needed.

Next, give your solar panels a good clean, and do so at least once a month over winter. You might also want to adjust the position of your solar panels to make sure they get maximum exposure to the winter sun.

If you're worried that all of this won't be enough to keep the batteries charged over winter, look at investing in a backup generator to use when it rains for days or while running the washing machine or other high-power equipment.



"The combination of small spaces and people usually results in dampness. Just by breathing, cooking, showering and going about our lives, we add moisture to the air.."



Keeping dirt and moisture outside

Tiny houses are easy to clean. But they also tend to get dirty quickly. When it's wet outside in winter, all it takes is two people walking in and out with dirty shoes a few times and bringing in some wet and muddy gear to make your otherwise tidy tiny look messy. Not to mention that all this wet and dirty gear adds to the dampness in the tiny.

If you can, create a covered area in front of your door where you can take off, and ideally leave, dirty shoes and jackets. If you have to bring them inside, have a mat right by the door and make it a point to remove any wet gear before you go any further into the house.

You might also want to think about your access way. Walking over grass to get from your car to the house might not be an issue in summer, but that grassy area can quickly become a mud pit in winter. Consider putting down some gravel or outdoor tiles to create a weatherproof path – just make sure it doesn't become slippery when wet.



If you prepare for the cold and damp season now, there'll be nothing to get in the way of enjoying winter in your tiny house. Stay warm, stay dry, keep the lights on, the dirt outside, and snuggle up with a hot cuppa and a good book - that's winter bliss.



Let us help you build your

Dream Tiny Home!



www.tinyhousebuilders.co.nz





"Encourage your children to be part of the tiny house lifestyle. Teach them about the importance of minimalism, organisation, and sustainability"



Tiny house living with kids:

10 Tips for a successful and happy family

Welcome to the world of tiny house living with kids! We all know that kids are like little whirlwinds that can take up a lot of space, but that doesn't mean you can't live in a tiny house and still have a happy family. Here are 10 tips to help you make the most out of your tiny house living with your little ones:

Declutter, declutter, declutter: This is the most important tip of all. You simply can't have too much stuff in a tiny house, especially with kids. Donate, sell or give away everything that you don't need or use regularly. This will create more space and a sense of order in your tiny home.

Create designated play areas: Even in a tiny house, kids need their own space to play and be creative. Designate a specific corner or area of your tiny house for their toys and activities. A fold-down table, a chalkboard wall or a toy chest are great space-saving options.

Utilise vertical space: In a tiny house, every inch of space counts. Take advantage of the height of your ceilings by installing shelves, hooks, and other storage solutions that go up, up, up. This will help you maximise your space and keep clutter off the floor.

Keep it minimal: Stick to the essentials and avoid buying things you don't need. This will help you keep your tiny house organised and make it easier to clean.

Think multifunctional: Choose furniture that can serve more than one purpose. A sofa that converts to a bed, a storage ottoman that doubles as seating, or a kitchen island that can be used as a dining table are all great space-saving options.

Keep it cosy: In a tiny house, it's all about creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Use soft textiles, warm lighting, and natural materials to make your tiny house feel like a home.

Get outside: Tiny house living can sometimes feel a bit cramped, so make sure to spend time outdoors. A small patio, balcony, or lawn can provide a much-needed escape from the close quarters of your tiny home.

Stay organised: A messy tiny house can quickly feel overwhelming. Develop a system for keeping things organised, whether it's a daily cleaning routine or a weekly decluttering session.

Involve the kids: Encourage your children to be part of the tiny house lifestyle. Teach them about the importance of minimalism, organisation, and sustainability. Let them help with household tasks like cooking, cleaning, and gardening.

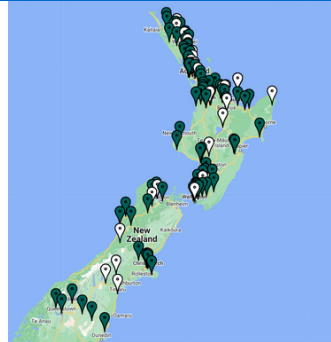
Stay positive: Tiny house living can be challenging, but it's also a unique and rewarding experience. Stay positive and focus on the benefits of living small, like reduced expenses, increased family time, and a more sustainable lifestyle.



There you have it, 10 tips for a successful and happy family in a tiny house. Remember, it's not about how much space you have, it's about how you use it. With a little creativity, organization, and positivity, you can make your tiny house a cosy and welcoming home for you and your family.

Wondering how to find land for your tiny house or motorhome?

Landshare: New Zealand's online directory connecting tiny house owners and land owners.

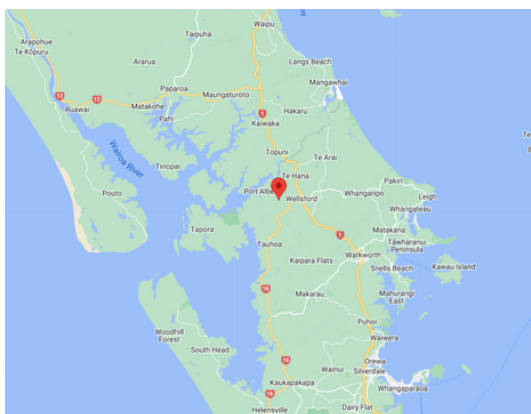


NEW



LAND FOR LEASE



Self sufficiency and FREE parking in exchange for labour - Port Albert



PORT ALBERT

 [Click here to view the full listing](#)
 \$0 per week - labour exchange

- **Available:** Now
- **Site foundation:** Flat site in paddock near house
- **Driveway foundation:** Will have own formed entrance off road
- **Parking:** Plenty of space for parking
- **Water connection:** No
- **Power connection:** No
- **Off-street parking:** Yes
- **Pets:** Yes
- **Child Friendly:** Yes
- **Smokers:** No
- **WiFi connection:** No
- **Private location:** No

This listing is seeking a couple or young family with a tiny house to join them on their self-sufficiency journey on their 30-acre property in Port Albert. Offering a free site for a tiny home, shared use of orchard, vegetable gardens, farm animal produce, bee hives, friendship, and family support. In exchange for the site, they are seeking a labour exchange where candidates are motivated, passionate, willing to learn about farming, self-sufficiency, and have relevant skills or trades. The opportunity is long-term and would require an interview process to ensure the right fit. The family consists of a husband who is an arborist, a qualified vet nurse who is now a stay-at-home mum, and two sons aged 4 and 7.

Wanting to make a passive income off your unused land?

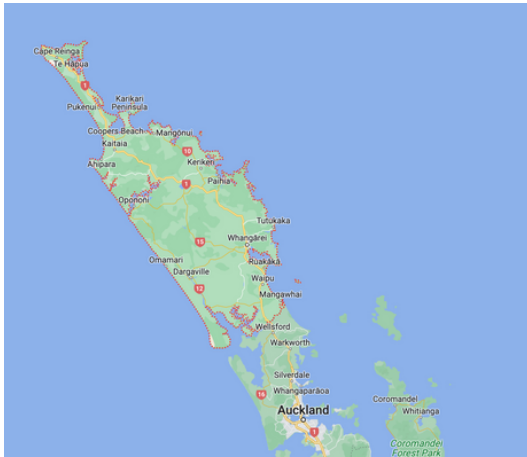
Landshare: New Zealand's online directory connecting tiny house owners and land owners.



NEW

LOOKING FOR LAND

"Wanting to put our anchors down" Long term lease desired



NORTHLAND

 [Click here to view the full listing](#)

Looking for:

- **Power connection:** No
- **Water connection:** No
- **Off-street Parking:** No
- **Pet Friendly:** Yes
- **Child Friendly:** No
- **Smokers:** No
- **WiFi Connection:** No
- **Private Location:** Yes

Active retired couple with friendly mut (accustomed to livestock & small children) seeking a long term lease in the North Island.

Wanting to erect over time level metal base, shed, septic system, 5th wheeler carport for roof protection, rain recovery system & solar panels as well as a poly tunnel for vegetables plus plant fruit trees. Capital improvements to the land will remain. Bush or water vistas preferred. Near a golf course or boat ramp would be a bonus.



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