



LASER PLUMBING. HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Two Coffs Coast tradesmen recently donated their time and skills to leading charity, Habitat for Humanity, in the fight against the growing issue of overcrowding in New Zealand.



Ian Bamford and Glen Hearne of Laser Plumbing Coffs Harbour flew to Auckland recently to volunteer for a charity task force program, which was a part of the Laser Group Annual Conference.

"We first learned about Habitat for Humanity through our association with the Laser Group and were happy to volunteer for the task force in Auckland," Ian said.

Ian and Glen joined over 90 other Laser tradies on the day to build three fully equipped sleep-outs, which are designed to provide additional accommodation for existing New Zealand homes, giving young children and teenagers more suitable sleeping conditions, and to reduce overcrowding.

"From the stats that Habitat for Humanity showed us, we saw that overcrowding amongst underprivileged families increases the risk of serious diseases and also has a negative impact on the wellbeing and education of young family members," said Ian.

According to a recent report by the University of Otago Wellington Campus, household overcrowding is rising in New Zealand, and the country is facing a severe shortage of affordable housing.

Infectious diseases from household overcrowding accounted for one in 10 admissions to New Zealand hospitals for the treatment of infectious diseases such as pneumonia, hepatitis, meningococcal and tuberculosis, but for Maori and Pasifika people, that figure jumped to one in five.

"It's obviously a huge issue in New Zealand and one that needs to be addressed, so we were more than happy to help out by working together to build these sleep-outs," said Glen.

The sleep-outs constructed by Laser Plumbing Coffs Harbour and their peers were roughly 2 m x 3 m in size and built in a way that allow them to

be transported easily and cost effectively.

Once completed, families in need purchase the sleep-outs at a reduced price, and on a 0% interest payment plan, provided that they also volunteer their own time and effort to producing the sleep-out.

Having the team from Laser Plumbing and Electrical help out with the construction of sleep-outs has obviously relieved some of that burden for the families.

"Despite having to contend with heavy rain and strong winds, the team still managed to get the job done," said Ian.

"Three sleep-outs were 90% completed, and we were also able to upgrade the facilities in the Habitat for Humanity buildings. It was

pretty obvious to us that they don't spend any money on themselves, so it was good to be able to help them out with that as well."

The Laser team also installed new lighting throughout the Habitat for Humanity offices, upgraded their bathrooms with new toilet suites and basins and also installed air conditioning units into the buildings.

The initiative raised over \$7,000 in cash donations for the charity, thanks to the contribution of Laser Plumbing Coffs Harbour and their Laser Group peers, and suppliers also pitched in over \$30,000 worth of product donations for the build day.

"It's great to be part of a network that is so willing to chip in for a good cause," said Ian.

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For more information on Habitat for Humanity or to learn how you can support the organisation

Visit www.habitat.org

For more information on Laser Plumbing Coffs Harbour, visit

coffsharbour.laserplumbing.com.au