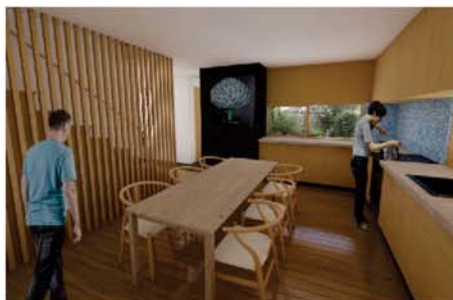


ZERO POWER BILLS

Since 2002 electricity prices have almost doubled and have risen at three times the cost of inflation, meaning lower income households now face fuel poverty. It's not just about money.

Recently in the news there have been reports of deaths that have been directly attributed to mouldy, cold, damp homes. This is very sad and unacceptable for



and more energy efficient and it is a myth that it's too expensive," Bob says.

"Those that think it's too costly are not aware of how to integrate the best systems, techniques and building methodologies. It's what smart people want and it's not rocket-science."

One single-storey and one adjacent two-storey home, the designs were initially rated as NZ's first 9-star homes

WHY CAN'T ALL NEW HOMES HAVE ZERO POWER BILLS?

New Zealand. Unfortunately cold, mouldy houses are a common problem and even some recently built homes have serious issues with cold, moisture and mould. Poor design and low code minimum standards result in homes that rate around 3 stars out of 10. Most of us have heard of the Homestar rating system which is essentially a measure of the

quality, health and comfort of a dwelling and its energy use and other important environmental and design considerations.

Bob Burnett Architecture are behind two new demonstration homes nearing completion in Addington's Church Square that are modest in size and affordable with zero power bills. "We can easily do much better to make our homes healthier

and with some added innovations will very soon be completed to a built rating of 10-stars.

Innovations include new super-efficient combined low-cost, in-slab and domestic hot water heating systems, which together with slab-edge insulation and excellent thermal design throughout reduce required heating and equipment



size to the extent it can be powered by PV solar panels. Effectively this is a combination of good design and integrating existing technologies utilising free heat from the sun.

An innovative new wall framing system, 'frame-saver' offers multiple benefits including improved thermal performance and strength.

"The Building Code is used as the target and many wrongly assume the code equates to quality when it's simply the legal minimum."

There is an obsession with minimum

initial build cost per square metre and maximising size, underestimating the long term ongoing costs associated with owning a home, he says. "We've been saying for some time now that affordability is not just about cheap houses, it's about the cost of ownership, the ongoing running costs and the return on investment.

"A little extra thought and good design from the outset will lead to a lifetime of savings and good health."

Environmental design is a topic close to Bob's heart, marked by the Energy

Efficiency Conservation Authority (EECA) award for energy leadership last year. "We're so far behind the rest of the world, it's time to step up our game and these homes will be the first of many to set a new benchmark."

Bob has been offering a unique opportunity to view the houses prior to completion, enabling industry and public to view the internal details before they are completed.

To find out more about the demonstration homes visit www.9star.co.nz and www.bbarc.com.