

27 September 2023

Warren Murdoch
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Tēnā koe Warren

Thank you for your email of 29 August to Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I would appreciate it if you could answer my question 3 properly. I asked how many of your houses when tested for meth were over 1.5. I do not want to know how many houses were over 15.

On 30 August 2023, you wrote to us and amended your request to the following:

Could I please be provided with the number of Kaianga Ora houses that have been tested for meth contamination and has returned a reading over 1.5ug/100cm². I have previously requested this but was not given the proper response. The period that I am interested in is between 1/8/22 to 31/7/23.

I am not interested in how many houses were over the Peter Gluckman threshold level only those that were over 1.5.

On 30 August 2023, Kāinga Ora wrote to you to clarify whether you wanted us to amend the answer provided on 29 August 2023 to your first request for official information, specifically whether you wanted us to exclude from the data houses that tested above their guideline level of 15. On 30 August 2023, you confirmed that your new request is what you are after.

Background information

Our system data is typically collected as “above” or “below” the threshold. The relevant threshold will either be the 15µg/100cm² outlined in the Sir Peter Gluckman ESR report of 2018, or the 1.5µg/100cm² set out in the New Zealand Standard NZS 8510:2017, depending on the property and contractual obligations that may be in place for that property, as with some lease agreements.

In the rare case we discover evidence of meth manufacture, the property is tested to a threshold of 1.5µg/100cm² in line with NSZ 8510:2017. The majority of residential properties where meth use is suspected are tested to a threshold of 15µg/100cm², in line with the Sir Peter Gluckman report (unless as previously mentioned, we have contractual obligations that set a different threshold).

It should also be acknowledged that Kāinga Ora does not support the statement that 1.5µg/100cm² is the ‘current standard’, or that test results between 1.5 and 14.99µg/100cm² would always be considered contaminated or uninhabitable. This is dependent on the source of contamination and may deviate from the most recent advice from ESR, which underpins our policies for meth testing and decontamination of residential properties.

Your current request asks how many Kāinga Ora homes have tested above 1.5µg/100cm² over the past 12 months from 1 Aug 2022 – 31 July 2023. You have also confirmed that this is irrespective of whether this exceeds a property's threshold level.

We can confirm that 159 properties nationwide returned a result of >1.5µg/100cm² when tested for meth between 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023. However, it is important to clarify that this response is not indicative of the number of properties that were over their respective guideline levels and subsequently required decontamination. That is to say, some of the properties that returned these results would have been considered safe.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of my decision on your request. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or Freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that Kāinga Ora proactively releases its responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request may be published at <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/publications/official-information-requests/>, with your personal information removed.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rachel Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rachel Kelly
Manager, Government Relations