



New Zealand  
Aged Care Association



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Media Release

## Fire & emergency law change could cost elderly

If left unchanged, the Government's proposed new Fire and Emergency NZ Bill (FENZ) could result in a significant increase in fees for retirement village residents and aged residential care home operators, many of whom are not for profit.

Simon Wallace, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Aged Care Association (NZACA), today told the Government Administration Select Committee that buildings which provide long-term accommodation for the elderly should be treated as residential property when setting FENZ levies under the new Bill.

"This is the position under the existing law. However, the proposed Bill in its current form is likely to categorise buildings containing retirement village and aged care residents' homes as commercial property.

"This could result in significantly higher levies being passed on to elderly residents, a large number of whom rely on government superannuation as their sole source of income. An increase in living expenses would further consume their low incomes."

Mr Wallace says it is only common sense that retirement villages and aged care homes continue to be treated as residential not commercial buildings.

"Buildings containing apartments or rooms for elderly residents are their homes and should therefore be treated the same way as a stand-alone dwelling under this law. It is not logical that this type of long-term residential accommodation should be regarded in the same way as a commercial office or a factory when setting FENZ levies.

"I can't see how a change in status from residential to commercial can be justified and can only think it is an oversight, and one that needs to be remedied before this Bill is passed into law."

NZACA made a joint submission on the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Bill, together with the Retirement Villages Association of New Zealand. [Click here](#) to read the submission.

### **About NZACA**

NZACA is a not-for-profit, national membership organisation which represents all parts of the aged care residential sector. Membership comprises almost 600 individual facilities throughout the country, accounting for 34,000 beds in the sector, or around 90% of total beds.

### **About RVA**

RVA is a voluntary industry organisation that represents the retirement village sector throughout New Zealand. 340 member villages operate around 23,700 units that are home to approximately 31,000 older New Zealanders. This is approximately 96% of the industry by unit number.

### **For more information:**

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