

NEW WEBSITE  
YOU'RE IN CONTROL

NETWORK  
IMPROVEMENTS

JULY  
STORMS

SMART  
METERING

POWER SAVING TIPS  
SPRING & SUMMER

Your community newsletter

[www.northpower.com](http://www.northpower.com)

## TUANZ Award Win

Northpower won the 'Next Generation Fibre-Optic Network Award' in the 2009 TUANZ (Telecommunications Users Association of New Zealand) Innovation Awards, held last night in Auckland.

Other category finalists were Enable Networks and Taranaki District Council.



From left to right - Mark Gatland - CEO, Richie Dempster, Ainsley van Cuylenburg, Graham Dawson, Chris McIntosh, Darren Mason, Tony Hales and Warren Moyes - Chairman.

The TUANZ judges praised Northpower saying *"within just 18 months, Northpower has built one of the most advanced open access fibre to the premise (FTTP), next generation networks using passive optical network layer 2 technologies."*

In his acceptance speech Mark Gatland, Northpower's Chief Executive thanked and acknowledged TelstraClear for partnering with Northpower to build a "successful commercial model" and staff "for their commitment and tireless efforts for making this happen".

*"We have rapidly implemented over 100 kilometres of overhead and underground fibre using existing power lines and ducts. Our fully operational Fibre Optic network delivers both voice and data services to business and enterprise in Whangarei,"* he said. The Network is capable of delivering up to 1000Mbps fully symmetrical upload and download speeds.

The network utilises Electricity infrastructure and the partnership with a major teleco puts Northpower at the forefront of high-speed broadband in New Zealand. The separation of infrastructure assets from retailer products allows Northpower to focus on the construction of cost-effective Fibre Optic networks to international standards.

*"Northpower has seen first hand the benefits fibre investment can bring to regional economies and wholeheartedly supports the Government's objective to accelerate ultra fast broadband to New Zealand,"* said Mr Gatland.

Northpower is part of NZRFG (New Zealand Regional Fibre Group) which have a model to fast track, build and integrate other regions in New Zealand to seamlessly provide a national solution to deliver the Government's goal of high speed broadband to 75% of the population in 10 years.

# Our new website - giving you control!



**We launched our new look and feel website at the Northland Home Show.**

We are very excited about our new website and the control it gives us to publish content and keep consumers informed with what's happening on our Network and at Northpower.

One of our new initiatives includes an exciting new Knowledge base section gleaned from the wealth of knowledge of our Customer Advisor, **Jan Thomsen**.

Jan speaks at community groups providing help and advice with all matters relating to electricity, such as; understanding your power bill, how to calculate the running costs of household appliances, and creating energy efficiencies in the home. To read more of Jan's helpful advice:



**Visit the Northpower Knowledge Base:**

[northpower.com/network/help](http://northpower.com/network/help)

Visit the Northpower website:

[www.northpower.com](http://www.northpower.com)

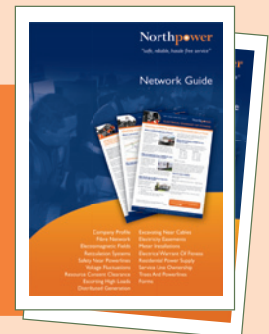
## Network Related Services

Many consumers don't know, but we offer a range of Network and Electrical related services in the Whangarei and Kaipara regions, such as;

underground cable locations, safety disconnections and we can provide an Electrical Warrant of Fitness (WOF) for Houses, Caravans, Motorhomes and boats.

For more information about Network Services we offer go online to:

**[northpower.com/network/services](http://northpower.com/network/services)**  
or call us on **09 430 1803** to receive a Network Guide in the mail.



## Smart Metering

**There is a move within the industry toward the introduction of Smart Metering.**

Currently Northpower owns most of the metering at the properties that are connected to our Network. Energy retailers are currently planning to replace Northpower meters with smart meters that can provide them remote meter reading.

The proposed meters are intended to offer functionality that is referred to as 'Smart Metering' which includes such functions as remote disconnection, smart appliance controllers and the recording of power quality.

We are working with the various organisations to ensure our end-use customers are able to receive the full benefits and value of any smart meters that are installed. We believe that unless the full functionality is realised then the end-use customer is unlikely to realise real savings.



## Network Improvement Projects

### Major Power Network Upgrade

**During the months of September and October we undertook a major upgrade of our powerlines network in Onerahi.**

Work began in Sherwood Road with 25 linesmen, five bucket trucks, five line trucks and three fault vehicles. It involved replacing ageing wooden poles, overhead power cables, wooden cross arms including ceramic insulators and pole-mounted transformers.

Much of the network was built in the early 1960s and supported less than half the number of households connected today. The upgrade is the result of large areas of the network simultaneously nearing the end of their lives, and corrosion of lines infrastructure by salt-laden air.

With the rapid expansion of the Onerahi and Whangarei surrounding areas we will be spending a total of \$3.3 million during the second phase to upgrade our substations in Onerahi, Maungatapere and Kamo starting at the end of this year and due for completion in early 2011.

The substation upgrades to the 11 kV (kilo Volt) switchboards have been prioritised due to the age of the switch gear and to increase capacity. The increased capacity will be able to sustain double the number of households in future, while improving reliability of power supply and reducing the impact of widespread faults to households now.

The key challenge with this project will be maintaining power supply where possible while ensuring all safety measures are taken when upgrading switch gear in a live environment.



Linesmen working in Onerahi

# July Storms

**July saw another two significant storms affecting our network for the third year in a row.** The two latest storms caused 50 network faults compared to the 61 in 2008 and 101 for the big storm of July 2007.

Over the weekend of the 11th and 12th of July 13,200 customers were affected by faults. We received 1,908 calls to our fault number and responded to 294 customer faults. The storm of the 19th July was slightly less impact with 7,300 customers affected by network faults and 184 customer faults responded too.

Significant improvements have been made to the way we manage and restore faults over the past 2 years, including;

- Our new faults phone system can answer up to 250 calls at one time, advising customers of power outages in their area and expected restoration times.
- Fonterra have given us dairy farmer's supply numbers which have been matched with our consumer's electricity meter's better assisting us to locate their property and better prioritise the restoration of power.
- We have spoken with forestry companies and the Kaipara District Council about reinforcing tree growth zone limits near powerlines and maintaining a strict vegetation maintenance schedule, minimising the effect trees could have on electricity supplies during storms.

**All these improvements have enabled us to improve response times and better prioritise work during storms.**



## Control Room Call Monitoring

**Many people may not realise that all calls in and out of Northpower's fault centre Control Room are recorded.**

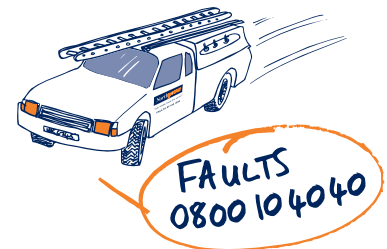
This is done to improve efficiency and safety. Network Services Manager Graham Dawson says "most power companies, as well as essential services, have an automatic logging system, so all Control Room calls can be reviewed for safety purposes and to ensure the work is not only done, but done correctly".

He said changes by the Commerce Commission Compliance auditing unit require parallel paths of information.

"Basically they need two proofs of some field work. We log field switching details manually and radio instructions between the Control Room and field staff are recorded as well."

Strict privacy policy ensures that only authorised personnel have access to the recorded information.

**Got a fault? Call us first.**



# Northland Home Show 2009

**Another successful event and great to have fibre to our site to be able to demonstrate its capabilities.**

We had a BIG LED Screen showing GI Joe and Star Trek movie trailers and Google Earth images which impressed our visitors. We had 2 competitions running; one a survey asking visitors how much they would be prepared to pay to be connected to the Fibre Network.

The winner of this competition was **Les Watene from Kamo**. The other competition was asking a question from our revamped web-site. *How long does it take to download a 700MB movie on our fibre network?* and emailing the answer back to us. The winner of this competition was **Jenny Bertie from Riverside**.

It was great to see so many of the visitors to the show come and taste Jan's tasty treats cooked on the energy efficient induction hob.



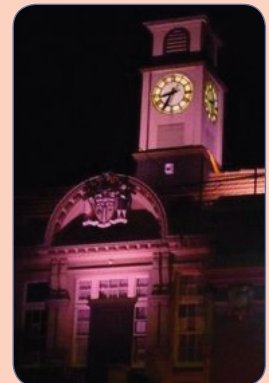
**Darren Mason**, Fibre Manager demonstrates the speed of our Fibre Network

## Lighting up for a good cause

In show of support for breast cancer awareness month, Northpower Electrical Services in conjunction with the Whangarei District Council (WDC) lit up the old town hall on Bank Street in Pink for the month of October.

Northpower Electrical Services works in close partnership with the WDC to provide effective lighting and electrical solutions all around the district. The soft white light reflecting off the calm waters of the Town Basin is yet another example of Northpower's contribution to improving the face of Whangarei.

**For assistance with your lighting requirements call Northpower Electrical Services on 09 430 1840.**





# Ask Jan?

**If you have any electrical or Northpower focused questions why not ask Jan.**



Featured questions will receive a **prezzy card** **\$25**

**Q Anna from Maunu asks:**

Should I turn my hot water off if I go away?

- A** If you're only going away for a couple of days – No leave it on.
- A** If you're going away for more than a week it could be worth turning off your hot water.
- A** You'll save on the standing loss and this will depend on how well insulated your cylinder is. Maybe one to three units per day saving (i.e. 20 to 60 cents based on Meridians controlled tariff).
- A** If you have a problem with your cylinder while you're away, turning it off will eliminate the worry of this.
- A** You'll come home to no hot water but an average cylinder will heat up in 4 to 5 hours.

Go to our website and subscribe to our online newsletter to receive the latest news and regular updates, including tips from Jan.

[www.northpower.com/subscribe](http://www.northpower.com/subscribe)

## Power Saving Tips for Spring and Summer

- Use cold water to wash clothes, with the occasional hot wash to flush through your washing machine. This will help you achieve energy savings

- Dry your clothes outside as often as the weather allows or have an undercover area to hang your clothes. A dryer will cost you 53 cents per hour (based on Meridian's tariff)



- You could save 5% off your power bill – just by turning appliances such as your TV, VCR, stereo and maybe microwave, off at the wall.



That way you won't be wasting electricity on stand-by. As a generalisation each appliance on stand-by could cost you 50cents per month. If it is not going to inconvenience you turn it off and save.

- Insulating your home will considerably reduce your energy needs and make the home warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Where possible insulate ceilings, walls and floors. The Government Warm Up NZ and Heat Smart introduced July 1 assists home owners to do this.



**For more information contact Jan on 09 430 1841**