

LIMs are changing to give more information about Natural Hazards: What property owners need to know

Since 1 July 2025 councils across New Zealand have had new obligations when preparing Land Information Memoranda (LIMs). Further changes will take effect from 17 October 2025, when new regulations will also standardise how hazard information must be summarised and presented in LIMs.

These reforms aim to make LIMs clearer, more understandable, and more consistent for prospective purchasers, but they also raise new questions for property owners regarding insurance, and potential changes in property value.

What changed on 1 July 2025?

The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Amendment Act 2023 (**Act**) updated the LIM provisions in the Act and introduced new obligations for councils. Key changes included:

- **Expanded hazard disclosure:** LIMs must now include easily understandable information about all known and potential natural hazards affecting a property, including potential cumulative risks and climate change impacts.
- **Regional Council input:** Regional Councils must supply hazard data to district and city councils to ensure they have the information they need to do provide this expanded disclosure.

- **Legal Protection for Councils:** Councils are protected from civil or criminal liability when providing hazard information in good faith.

- **No New Modelling Required:** Councils are not required to create new hazard assessments, only to share what they already know. However separate obligations under the Resource Management Act 1991 mean that this information is regularly being updated by regional councils to provide more accurate and detailed data.

What is changing from 17 October 2025?

On 17 October 2025, the Local Government (Natural Hazard Information in Land Information Memoranda) Regulations 2025 (**Regulations**) will take effect, which gives specific directions about how natural hazard information must be presented in LIMs.

Key updates include:

- **Standardised format:** LIMs must include a dedicated 'natural hazard section' with clearly summarised information including specific content and following a standard format which will be particularly useful to ensure a consistent approach across Aotearoa New Zealand.
- **Plain language summaries:** Regional councils must provide plain-English summaries of technical reports to help prospective purchasers easily understand the hazard and what it might mean for that property.
- **Mapping Requirements:** LIMs must include relevant maps showing natural hazard zones and clear boundaries.
- **Cross-agency links:** LIMs must reference or link to hazard information held by other agencies e.g. regional councils.

Councils should be updating their LIM templates and systems right now to meet these obligations.

Implications for property owners

LIMs are changing to give more information about Natural Hazards: What property owners need to know (Continued)

While the changes to both the Act and the Regulations aim to improve transparency, and ensure that property buyers have access to all the hazard information that their local Council holds in a useable form, this may potentially create short term pain for some landowners in the following ways:

- **Insurability risks:** Properties flagged with higher hazard risks, especially those linked to effects of climate change such as coastal inundation, may become harder or more expensive to insure.
- **Property value impacts:** Buyers may start to pay more attention to, and potentially be deterred from, purchasing properties carrying higher hazard risks. This could start to affect resale value in some areas.
- **Legal Disputes:** If a landowner considers that the hazard information is inaccurate or unfair, then they will need to engage in regional and district plan processes under the RMA in order to have the information corrected/changed.

Commentary in the property sector is mixed in response to these changes. Some note that it will help prospective property purchasers and lenders make better-informed decisions with clearer information. Others caution that clearer hazard information may lead to tougher lending and insurance conditions. A [report](#) prepared for the Ministry for the Environment and published in June of this year has already warned that more than hundreds of thousands of homes worth an estimated \$180 billion are located on flood-prone land. Insurability of the most affected properties is therefore a point we will be watching closely, with insurers substantive responses to this growing body of data and analysis likely to become clearer in the next few years.

Key takeaways

These changes arrive at a time when New Zealand is grappling with the impacts of climate change and increasing natural hazard events. The reforms are a step toward greater transparency and national consistency, but they also raise tough questions for

some current owners about fairness, risk, and the future of property ownership in hazard-prone areas. If values do start to lower in some areas in the short term, some current owners may feel that they are being unfairly affected by the sharing of information about risks associated with their properties.

If you are looking to sell, it is worthwhile obtaining and checking the LIM for your property prior to marketing it for sale, especially if selling in a hazard prone area. We can assist you with understanding more about this technical information and assess how it might actually affect you.

Want to know more?

If you have questions about how these changes affect your property, contact our Property or Resource Management Teams.