

Most claims due to tree damage after Auckland storm

Auckland – 29 May 2018 – The majority of claims from Auckland’s recent storm were related to falling trees and branches, says AA Insurance. The company received more claims in one day than it normally would in a month. Compared with Cyclone Gita, which hit the country last February, the Auckland storm resulted in six times as many claims for AA Insurance.

“There was a common theme with our Auckland customers’ home, contents and car claims after hurricane force gusts and heavy rain in the region last month,” says Amelia Macandrew, Customer Relations Manager, AA Insurance. “Most involved fallen trees and limbs that smashed and crashed their way onto, or through, customers’ property including fences, guttering and roofs.”

One AA Insurance customer had a tree fall on their shared boundary fence, causing around \$1,500 worth of damage, while another customer had a tree fall on their carport. Thankfully their car was elsewhere, yet the cost of their claim for removing the tree and replacing the damaged car port was almost \$3,000.

In another part of Auckland, a large branch from a tree only a few metres from a customer’s house landed on the roof, causing several thousand dollars’ worth of damage to the roof as well as the guttering.

“When a tree hits a house, urgent repairs are often needed to keep the home watertight and warm,” says Amelia. “And while trees are a picturesque element of most Kiwi gardens and public spaces, many would benefit from some form of maintenance.

So, now’s the time to check for weakened or damaged trees, and have them pruned or removed before we head into winter, she says.

“We’re keen to help our customers before another big event strikes so they don’t have to deal with the stress of a damaged home or potential power outage. Tree maintenance is one way Kiwis can plan ahead to help reduce the impact of extreme weather events. Time and money spent now to prune or trim those large branches or dead limbs, will be well worth it when another storm hits.”

AA Insurance tips for tree maintenance

- Assess the trees around your property before and after severe weather. If they look weakened or damaged, they should be pruned or removed.
- Check with your local council about the rules and regulations around chopping, pruning or trimming a tree on your property, or the property of your neighbours or the council. You'll also need to consider if the tree is protected.
- Know your limits – while it may be safe for you to trim the odd branch, for the big projects that may damage a home, or harm people, it's best to contact an arborist.
- If you see a problem or potential hazard with a tree on council property, report it.
- Know how your trees will grow before you plant them, and avoid placing large ones too close to your house. When in doubt, talk to a gardening professional.

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About AA Insurance

AA Insurance is an independently operated, New Zealand-based joint venture between the New Zealand Automobile Association (NZAA) and Suncorp Group. We have demonstrated trusted expertise in home, contents and car insurance in New Zealand since 1994. We underwrite our own policies and sell direct to New Zealanders. Our more than 700 staff look after over 375,000 customers with over 710,000 policies.

We proudly partner with Eden Park, support youth charity Blue Light, and have been consistently recognised by: Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands (since 2011), NZ Insurance Industry Awards (since 2012), IBM Kenexa Best Workplaces Survey (since 2008), Canstar Blue Most Satisfied Customers (2011-2016), and the Colmar Brunton Corporate Reputation Index (since 2015) that recognises New Zealand's most successful companies.

AA Insurance has an A+ (Strong) Insurer Financial Strength Rating given by Standard and Poor's (Australia) Pty Ltd. For further information visit www.aainsurance.co.nz.

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