

## INFORMATION ABOUT EQCOVER CLAIMS FOR STORM, FLOOD, AND LANDSLIP DAMAGE

If your property has been affected by a storm, flood or landslip, it's likely to be a very stressful time as you start the clean-up of your property.

We recognise the process of making an insurance claim can sometimes feel overwhelming. Your insurer will manage your entire insurance claim, including any EQCover portion on our behalf.

This document provides some information about the claims process and how EQCover claims are managed.

### ABOUT EQCOVER

EQCover is the Government's natural disaster insurance for residential buildings and residential land. You automatically have EQCover for your home<sup>1</sup> and some residential land if you have a current private insurance policy for your home, that includes fire insurance (and most do).

EQCover provides insurance for a range of natural hazards. For weather related events, EQCover may be available for:

#### Landslip damage:

- We cover the cost to repair, replace or reinstate your home up to the EQCover residential building cap\*.
- We cover for the cost to repair or reinstate your insured residential land, up to the EQCover land cap\*.

#### Flood and storm damage:

- We only cover the cost to repair or reinstate your insured residential land, up to the EQCover land cap\*.
- Your private insurer generally provides cover for your home.

*\* For more information on EQCover residential building and land caps, please visit [www.eqc.govt.nz](http://www.eqc.govt.nz), or refer to one of our Guides.*

### YOUR INSURER MANAGES YOUR EQCOVER CLAIM

Most claims for natural disaster damage are handled by your insurer, who also deliver the EQCover portion of the claim on behalf of Toka Tū Ake EQC<sup>2</sup>.

Your insurer is always your best point of contact. Your timeline and next steps may be different to your neighbour or friend, so contact your insurer with any questions you may have.

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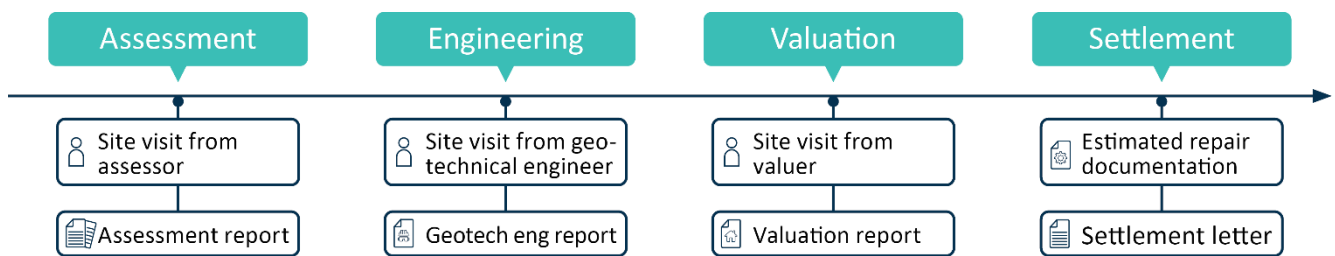
<sup>1</sup> In this information sheet we use the term 'home', while the EQC Act uses the term 'dwelling' to refer to any self-contained premises used, or capable of being and intended to be used, as a home or holiday home.

<sup>2</sup> Direct EQCover customers, and a small number of customers whose insurers are not part of the Natural Disaster Response Model, should contact Toka Tū Ake EQC directly to discuss their EQCover claim.

## THE PROCESS AND TIMING FOR EQCOVER RESIDENTIAL LAND CLAIMS

EQCover claims for damaged residential land may require several steps to occur in a particular order before a settlement outcome is determined. These claims can often take longer to reach settlement stage than other types of insurance claims due to the complexities involved.

There are four general steps for settling more complex EQCover land claims (e.g. for landslip damage):



Flood and storm damage is often less complex to assess than landslip damage and can often be assessed without a geotechnical assessment. This means they may be settled more quickly.

It's difficult to say how long this process will take, but residents can generally expect their EQCover land claim to take some months. Some factors that may impact this timing include unsafe properties and where there is restricted access to a property, availability of specialist resources (e.g. geotechnical engineers) or complications of land damage.

Each situation is unique so it's best to continue talking to your insurer to understand your timeframes and next steps.

## HOW MUCH AM I COVERED FOR?

### EQCover for your home (for landslip damage)

Toka Tū Ake EQC provides a maximum amount of cover for damage to a residential building under Earthquake Commission Act 1993 (the EQC Act). This is called the 'EQCover building cap'. Any building cover above the EQCover building cap is provided by your private insurer, as outlined in your valid policy.

### EQCover for residential land

#### What land is covered?

New Zealand is one of the few countries in the world to have natural disaster insurance for some residential land. There are limits to this cover, defined by the EQC Act.

Residential land is the land:

- under your home (or under any insured outbuildings such as a shed or a garage);
- within eight metres of your home and outbuildings;
- under or supporting your main access way, within 60 metres of your home; and
- residential land also includes bridges and culverts within the above land areas and some retaining walls.

## How much can be paid out for residential land claims?

Under the EQC Act, EQCover cannot pay any more than what the covered damaged land is worth.

This means, for residential land claims, EQCover will pay the lesser of either:

- the value of your covered damaged land and the indemnity value of any insured bridges, culverts or retaining walls that have been lost or damaged, at the time of the natural disaster (known as the land cap), or
- the repair or reinstatement cost.

Each EQCover claim is subject to an excess, which is deducted from the settlement amount before it is paid.

More information is available at [www.eqc.govt.nz](http://www.eqc.govt.nz) or in the [Householders' Guide to Residential Land](#) and the [EQCover Land Claims fact sheet](#).

As EQCover claims are generally settled by cash payment, it is important to use this payment to repair or reinstate your damaged property. In some circumstances, future entitlements to EQCover may be affected if payments are not used for this purpose.

## THE COUNCIL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME

If you're concerned about the safety of your property, contact your council (or local Civil Defence during a state of emergency). Only they can decide whether a property is dangerous or insanitary. They also make the decisions about whether to apply red or yellow stickers (sometimes called 'notices' or 'placards') to buildings under the Building Act 2004.

If a sticker has been applied to your home, it will require you to take steps to make your property safe. You may need to get expert advice (at your own expense), for example, from a geotechnical engineer. Their report may help you to prove to the council that your property is safe so they can remove the sticker.

This is different to any report that your insurer may commission from a geotechnical engineer as part of assessing your property. That report only discusses the damage to your property for the purposes of settling your EQCover insurance claim. It does not report on safety or the risk of people getting injured, although if your insurer is concerned your property could be dangerous or insanitary, they will tell your council.

If you have any questions about a sticker, contact your council (or Civil Defence). They can explain what the notice means and the steps you need to take to have it removed.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For information specific to your claim, please contact your private insurer.

For more information about EQCover for residential land damage, the Toka Tū Ake EQC website has the following:

- [What you're covered for webpage](#) – outlines EQCover for residential land, how settlements are calculated and general information about claims.
- [Householders' Guide to Residential Land](#) – a helpful overall guide to EQCover for residential land.
- [EQCover Land claims factsheet](#) – outlines this process in more detail and who's involved.
- [Land Cover – Storms and Floods factsheet](#) – outlines EQCover in relation to storm or flood damage.

## FREE, INDEPENDENT ADVICE IS AVAILABLE

The Residential Advisory Service is available to help people navigate the claim process. This is a free, impartial service provided by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). People can contact [info@advisory.org.nz](mailto:info@advisory.org.nz) or ring **0800 777 299, 03 379 7027** for more information.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit [www.eqc.govt.nz](http://www.eqc.govt.nz) or;

- Call 0800 DAMAGE (0800 326 243)
- Write to Toka Tū Ake EQC, [info@eqc.govt.nz](mailto:info@eqc.govt.nz) or PO Box 311, Wellington, 6140
- If your claim is managed by your private insurer, you will need to contact them directly for your EQCover claim related matters.

*This document is intended as a guide only.*

*Full details of available cover are outlined on our website, [www.eqc.govt.nz](http://www.eqc.govt.nz) and in the Earthquake Commission Act (1993)*