



Maru pyjama appeal warms up winter

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More than 1,000 King Country locals are warmer at night thanks to the gift of brand-new winter pyjamas.

Maru Energy Trust's 2024 Kahumoe PJ project has seen 1,067 pairs of pyjamas distributed across the rohe. That's the most ever gifted, up from 497 pairs when the appeal began in 2022.

Maru Energy Trust co-ordinator Jo Meads, who manages the project, said she was quietly hoping for 1,000 pairs "but they kept on coming and I was thrilled".

"This project has captured people's hearts. For those who can afford it, donating a pair of pyjamas is an easy way of doing something that makes a positive difference, quickly," Jo said.

"We've had people also donate cash which we've used to purchase pyjamas in specific sizes. So a lot of people, including adults, have finally had something warm to sleep in at night."

Pyjamas were distributed across the King Country on Maru's behalf. Organisations that stepped up to help included Taumarunui Community Kokiri Trust, Ngāti Maniapoto Marae Pact Trust, Waitomo Waipa Women's Refuge, Ōtorohanga Support House Whare Awhina, Nga Waihua o Paerangi Trust (Ohakune), Maniapoto Whānau Ora Centre, Te Kuiti Community House, Mangakino Health Centre, Te Arawa Whānau Ora ki Mangakino, and Waikato DHB Te Whatu Ora.

Fran Muraahi and Tracey Martin-Potaka from Maniapoto Whānau Ora Centre in Te Kuiti said the gift of pyjamas made a huge difference to whānau on limited budgets.

"It felt like Xmas for a lot of our tamariki and was a huge relief as parents were hit hard with the unexpected freezing temperatures. To receive the pyjamas came as a welcome relief," Tracey said.

"One of our mums told us one of her boys refused to take his off. She had to bribe him to put them in the wash because he loves his dinosaur pyjamas so much."

Adam Roberts, a community support worker from Kokiri Trust in Taumarunui agreed.

“When delivering the pyjamas to our whānau, we received reactions expressing gratitude, relief, and joy. To those who have supported and donated to this appeal, I would say thank you for your kindness and generosity. You have helped make a meaningful difference in the lives of those less fortunate, bringing warmth and comfort to whānau in need,” he said.

“This appeal reminds whānau they are not alone in their struggles. It brings a sense of community, care and consideration that is invaluable.”

At Mangakino School, office administrator Lily Polatsek said tamariki were excited and grateful.

“Every one of them was extremely grateful and appreciative and wanted to try them on straight away,” Lily said.

“It is lovely to see such a great cause donating pyjamas to schools, whānau and the community. This is the second year our school has been a part of the appeal and we are thankful for that. “

Maru’s Kahumoe PJ Project kicked off in April with a donation of 80 pairs of pyjamas from staff at The Lines Company (TLC). TLC is a major funder of Maru Energy Trust and over the next three years, will donate \$450,000 each year to Maru to help make local homes warmer, drier and healthier.

Jo said there was also huge support from Maru’s insulation and heating providers.

“At its heart, this is a local appeal, helping local people and it’s something Maru is very pleased to be part of.”

Photos:



Taumarunui’s Karena Houppapa was delighted to receive brand-new pyjamas for her whānau from Maru’s Kahumoe PJ Project.



Ōtorohanga Support House staff Leanne Oldfield, Leah Wallace, Jo Taane, Dot Ngarotata and Pila Rata helped deliver gifted winter pyjamas to local whānau.

For more information, email Jo Meads at hello@maru.org.nz or call 0800 808 901.

About Maru Energy Trust: Maru is a not-for-profit charitable trust, established in August 2018 by The Lines Company. Maru works alongside communities to put in place practical initiatives to help homes become warmer, drier, healthier and ultimately use less energy. Supporters include The Lines Company, Waitomo Energy Services Customer Trust (WESCT), King Country Trust, Ōtorohanga Charitable Trust, Trust Waikato, New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, Ruapehu District Council and Ōtorohanga District Council.