

1. What is the date of construction?

Why does this matter?: Between 1995 and 2003 houses in New Zealand may be constructed using only untreated timber. This is the main "at risk" period.

Red Flag Untreated timber and cladding fixed directly to the timber framing led to many "leaky homes" being constructed during this period. Be wary of potential problems.

2. What cladding is used?

Why does this matter?: Monolithic, plaster cladding has a higher failure rate than other cladding types. The majority of leaky homes have monolithic cladding.

Other things to look for Plaster cladding with no ground clearance. Cracks in cladding. Rust stains on cladding, Recessed windows. Concealed gutters.

Red Flag All of the above are tell tale signs of a building with a poorly constructed monolithic cladding system. If the building has monolithic cladding check that it has a vented cavity. This can be done by looking under the bottom of the cladding with a make-up mirror. If you see a plastic strip with holes in it there is a cavity. If there is not this may not be a cavity and the dangers of failure are greater.

3. Does the house have eaves?

Why does this matter?: Eaves provide a level of weather protection to the cladding. Houses where the eaves are narrow or non existent have a reduced level of protection from the weather.

Red Flag Reduced protection to the cladding membrane increases the risk of moisture ingress. Be wary of houses with narrow or non existent eaves.

4. Is there a deck?

If yes, is the deck located on ground level?

If no, is it a cantilevered deck? (Juts out from the wall)

If yes, is it built with timber or concrete?

Why does this matter?: Poorly constructed timber cantilever decks or enclosed decks can allow moisture ingress into the timber framing.

Red Flag For timber decks problems can arise where the deck is attached to the house or where cantilevered joists have been used. Cantilevered joists are continuous from the inside of the building, out through the cladding to the outside of the building and penetrations through the cladding can be difficult to seal correctly allowing to moisture ingress.

5. Does the building have round/arched windows?

Why does this matter?: Any shape of window other than square/rectangular are notoriously difficult to seal.

Red Flag Poorly sealed windows may allow moisture ingress into the building. \$\$ to fix.
