



**Hon Kieran McAnulty**  
Minister for Rural Communities

PRESS RELEASE  
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## Rural communities to benefit from education and transport funding in Budget 2023

- Top up funding for emergency repairs and renewals to the transport network resulting from increasingly severe and frequent weather events
- Up to 1000 new EV chargers in smaller rural communities
- An additional 175 rural schools to get special funding for property improvements

A top up of funding for emergency repairs to the transport networks of \$60.7 million in 2023/24 will ensure that rural communities are less likely to be isolated after an extreme weather event.

“Rural communities are at risk from being severely impacted by extreme weather events, it’s so crucial that emergency services have road access through to remote communities,” Kieran McAnulty said.

“The financial support that we have provided to Waka Kotahi so far has meant that in the last year teams of roading contractors have been able to repair critical roads in areas such as Northland, Coromandel, Tararua District, Wairarapa Tairāwhiti, Hawke’s Bay, Nelson and Marlborough.

“It has also meant that Waka Kotahi has been able to carry out over 2,300 lane km of renewals and fix over 54,000 potholes across the state highway network.

“The additional funding for emergency works announced today will ensure that Waka Kotahi can continue to respond rapidly to extreme weather and repair the roads for rural communities as quickly as possible,” Kieran McAnulty said.

Budget 2023 also funds between 600 and 1000 EV chargers in smaller rural communities’ with \$30 million approved for this purpose out of a total of \$120 million from a broader electric vehicle charging initiative.

“With increased charging infrastructure, rural communities will be able to harness the benefits of EVs as urban centres are able to and bring visitors to their region.

“We don’t want charging to be a barrier in rural communities for adapting to EVs, this funding will ensure more kiwis are able to make the switch to an EV,” Kieran McAnulty said.

The funding also provides 23 additional electric vehicle journey charging hubs along key arterial routes and resourcing for government agencies to support delivery of the Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.

Education in rural communities will also receive a boost with 175 schools added to the Ngā Iti Kahurangi programme which upgrades small, isolated schools’ properties with \$63.1 million.

“Ngā Iti Kahurangi means ‘highly valued treasures,’ to reflect the importance of small and remote schools to their communities.

“Rural schools face different property challenges from central city schools, such as the cost of building contractors as the requirement to travel significant distances is often unattractive to contractors and invokes significant expense on the part of the school,” Kieran McAnulty said.

The programme helps rural schools improve lighting, noise, temperature and energy efficiency. Improvements include LEDs, acoustic panels and thermal insulation in ceilings. The programme also installs residual current devices and support state primary schools to update their Asbestos Management Plans.

“The programme helps rural schools meet Government’s 2030 target school standards, but also create the best environment for children to learn in.

“Teachers in rural locations play such a crucial part in their community. The school is often the heart of the community and I’m glad we are able to help those schools create the best physical environment possible for their children through Budget 2023,” Kieran McAnulty said.

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