



CASE STUDY: CURTAIN BANK (2)

August 2008

Background

Mohamed Cassim Nawaz is a Sri Lankan refugee who came to live in New Zealand seven months ago with his wife Shakeela and two boys, Millath and Minhaj.

The family is not used to cold weather, having recently experienced snow for the first time. While they found the snow entertaining, in general it has been difficult for them to adjust to the colder climate.

Role of CEA

Cassim is taking English and computing courses, and it was during a lesson that his teacher informed him and other refugees of the CEA Curtain Bank Project.

He made contact with CEA and visited Curtain Bank Coordinator, Gayle Katene, who showed him a range of curtains. He chose curtains for the bedrooms, kitchen, living and dining rooms, and the front door. He was given a form to complete and advice on how to measure his home for the curtains.

The curtains needed resizing and Gayle suggested Cassim get thermal backing for them. These adjustments were made by CEA staff in just over a week.

Cassim also purchased a Window Kit from CEA, which involved placing a Crystal Clear Shrink Film between the window and curtains for extra warmth. He says the price he paid at CEA was much less than the kits retail for in shops.

Cassim is “really thankful” for the service and help he received at the Curtain Bank. He says Gayle offered a lot of useful advice on how to warm his home and was “very kind.”

He appreciated the fact Gayle spoke slowly for him as English is his second language, and emphasises that people from other cultures should feel comfortable going there. Cassim has already recommended the service to other refugees and has taken one to the Curtain Bank, where Gayle offered advice and provided the refugee with measuring tape to take home.

Benefits of CEA Curtains

Cassim says he and his family sometimes find New Zealand “very freezing,” but take comfort in the fact they know they will always come home to a warm house.

He says they have not experienced the colds and sickness they were expecting.

Conclusion

Cassim and his family are very happy they found out about the Curtain Bank Project and are feeling the benefits of having large, warm curtains in the house. Cassim was impressed with the kindness and helpfulness of the staff at CEA and particularly the way in which they accommodated for his lack of English.