

City firm to pull the plug on heaters

Marta Steeman
marta.steeman@press.co.nz

Skope heaters, commonplace in homes 20 years ago, will become a thing of the past after the Christchurch company stops manufacturing them this year.

Family-owned Skope Industries has decided to concentrate on its manufacturing of commercial refrigeration units and will close its heater manufacturing and distribution business.

Skope makes heaters but also imports a range.

Its products include panel and fan heaters, bathroom heaters and heated towel rails.

Skope general manager of heating Bruce Vine said the company would keep supplying heaters through winter, but expected the business to have wound down completely by the end of the year.

The company was talking to its customers about this.

Vine said heaters now formed only a small part of Skope's operation – 5 per cent of its sales.

Staff employed in the manufacturing of heaters will switch to the refrigeration division and about five staff working in sales of heating products may have other jobs in refrigeration or possibly become redundant.

Skope was started 46 years

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ago by well-known Christchurch businessman Robert Stewart, son of the late Sir Robertson Stewart, who himself developed a large Christchurch business, PDL Industries, supplying electrical and electronic product, before selling it to French company Schneider Electric in 2001.

Skope started manufacturing commercial fridges in the 1970s and that operation now accounts for 95 per cent of sales.

About 350 of the company's 400 staff work at its headquarters in Addington with another 50 around New Zealand and Australia.

The company is owned by Robert Stewart and his wife Barbara, and is run by their son Guy, the managing director, and daughter Alexandra is also a director and involved marketing and development.

Manufacturer:
Managing director of Skope Industries, Guy Stewart.
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