

CASE STUDY

POWERING AN NZ GEOTHERMAL PROJECT

An innovative pop-up hire branch has successfully met the construction needs of a geothermal power plant being built on New Zealand's North Island.

The modular store supplied vital equipment to multiple trades and contractors working on the 174MW Tauhara Power Station at Taup. Tauhara will be a single-shaft steam turbine, the largest of its kind in the world.

As a unique, purpose-built branch, the pop-up focused on optimising response time, with 24/7 availability of equipment and fast sourcing of large and harder-to-find gear.

Kennards Hire partnered with principal contractor, Naylor Love, to support construction of the plant.

This strong and productive collaboration helped to minimise downtime and streamline operations across the entire site.

WHY A POP-UP HIRE BRANCH?

Kennards Hire NZ Sales Manager Richard White says the idea for a pop-up branch emerged from pre-planning consultations.

It soon became clear that such a major project demanded a fully operational, on-site service area, responsive to customer needs around the clock.

"We were delighted to help manage such an ambitious project," Richard says.

"We were unsure how many of the multiple contractors would commit to working with us, as it wasn't a prerequisite.

"There were plenty, as it happened. We loaded customers in as soon as they landed on-site, so they could hire immediately, and didn't have to leave to source their tools and equipment."

The modular branch incorporated:

- Customer service area.
- Wash bays to clean equipment.
- Ample storage to protect equipment.
- Up to three staff at any time.

RIGHT EQUIPMENT, RIGHT TIME

The pop-up branch provided everything from general hand tools, used daily, to large, specialist equipment sourced by the Kennards Hire team as needed.

With up to 12 contractors and trades on-site at any one time, the demand for tools was constant. Contractors include United Civil, CLL Solutions, Aotea Electrical, Jensen steel, Connell Contractors and Dialog Fitzroy, all managing different parts of the project.



Kennards Hire pop-up site on location

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"Our project manager worked with the manager of each division to make sure the right gear was always available," Richard says.

"This kept operations flowing and the work schedule on track." According to Richard, agility was key.

"We were constantly on the front foot. By anticipating demand for equipment early on, we stayed ahead of the game."

The pop-up remained on-site for more than two years, to service the critical construction phase. When demobilised to make way for driveways and access areas at the plant, Kennards Hire bought a local business and created a new branch, now a permanent part of the hiring network.

"We are very proud to be part of such a significant infrastructure project in NZ. This has now transitioned into Kennards Hire being able to support the local community through our fully fledged Kennards Hire branch in Taupō," General Manager NZ Tom Kimber says.

The team worked closely with Simon Bews, Naylor Love Site Manager, who was instrumental in helping to establish both the pop-up and the permanent branch in Taupō. "I'm really proud of our involvement throughout the project," Simon states.

"Now the branch is going great guns, busy serving high demand. It's great to have a permanent hiring presence in the area to service ongoing projects."

KENNARDS HIRE, HANDS-ON HELP TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES

The team faced plenty of challenges on the project.

- Dealing with on-site flooding. Equipment had to be moved out of trenches in heavy rain and placed into storage.
- Being on call for concrete pours. These often happened late at night, so other operators had a clear site during the day.
- Overseeing night security. Handling lighting, security and safe use of equipment in dark areas, overnight and early morning.

"We are very proud to be part of such a significant infrastructure project in NZ."



1. Tauhara Power Station project site. 2. Kennards Hire new Taupō Branch.

- Supplying enough telehandlers. These were in constant demand to move heavy and frequent loads, supporting the turbine network.

According to Simon, Kennards Hire was always there to help find workable solutions.

"They organised whatever we needed. The on-site team was a fantastic bunch of guys, nothing was an issue, they always helped out," he says.

"It made a huge difference having them there. We hammer our equipment and have to use quality gear, well maintained. We always get that with Kennards Hire. They understand how downtime costs money, and we can't have that.

"When we suddenly needed new equipment, Kennards Hire sourced it for us. We didn't have to waste time with emails or phone calls, they took care of everything – in a hurry. They helped us deal with flooding too, nothing was too much trouble."

Simon now uses the Taupō Branch on a regular basis. "It's our go-to local hiring company," he says.

A PARTNER OF CHOICE

Kennards Hire has positioned itself as partner of choice on an extensive, complex project requiring specialist consultancy and preparation.

Involved from the planning stage, Kennards Hire helped manage floods, heavy demand for tools, and overnight concrete pours on a remote site housing multi-million-dollar turbines and heavy plant.

The Tauhara plant is expected to displace 500,000 tons of carbon emissions annually, as fossil fuel generation shuts down. This is equivalent to removing more than 220,000 petrol cars from New Zealand roads.

Tom says the team's expertise makes innovative solutions possible.

"Kennards Hire has long-term expertise in commercial and infrastructure projects, with the capacity to scale up on demand. We have the knowledge and flexibility to help clients manage their projects from end-to-end."

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