

Builder convicted for carrying out plumbing work unlicensed

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has successfully prosecuted a Victorian man for breaching the *Building Act 1993*.

Corio man Ahmad Heidari was today convicted and fined \$1000 and ordered to pay costs in the Geelong Magistrates' Court for working as a plumber without being registered.

The VBA's Executive Director of Operations Lynda McAlary-Smith said the regulator won't hesitate to go after those practitioners who do the wrong thing.

"We have rules in place for a reason. It is the responsibility of everyone carrying out plumbing work to know them and follow them because when they ignore them, things can go wrong."

"The *Building Act 1993* gives us significant powers to hold practitioners who do the wrong thing to account, allowing us to protect consumers and uphold integrity in the building industry," Ms McAlary-Smith said.

The owner of the home where the work was carried out engaged a company for which Mr Heidari was a subcontractor in January 2019.

Mr Heidari attended the Chadstone property where he replaced gutters, a downpipe and a box gutter.

The homeowner wasn't satisfied with the work, so he contacted the company Mr Heidari was subcontracted by to complain. As a result, Mr Heidari packed up his tools, left the property and didn't return.

The installation of gutters and downpipes is defined as roofing (stormwater) work under the Plumbing Regulations 2018 and can only be carried out by a licensed or registered plumber, which Mr Heidari was not.

The VBA works proactively to promote safe plumbing practices that protect the health and safety of Victorians as well as the integrity of the water system.

Given the possible ramifications of carrying out plumbing work incorrectly, plumbers licensed in roofing (stormwater) must have first demonstrated competency in that area of work.

It also allows them to issue a compliance certificate for their work. This gives the VBA a record of work and allows the regulator to audit the work to ensure it complies with regulations.

"The regulations are in place to protect the health and safety of the community and to ensure confidence in the building industry," Ms McAlary-Smith said.

"Homeowners often spend significant amounts of money and invest time and energy into building projects – they rightfully expect the work is carried out to the highest standard by a registered practitioner."

To find a licensed plumber visit vba.vic.gov.au/find.