



Media Release

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Plumber held to account for breaking the rules

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has penalised a plumber over \$9000 for breaches of the *Building Act 1993*, including for failure to have pipework inspected, increasing the risk of flooding and property damage.

Ben Juchno (accreditation number 48991) faced a VBA Plumbing Inquiry and was penalised \$9,554.50 for covering installed pipe work on a below ground sanitary drain at a Kew property, prior to the pipework being offered for inspection by the VBA.

Incorrectly installed drains pose a real risk to properties, with the potential for water not flowing correctly and flooding a home, causing extensive damage and costing thousands of dollars in repairs.

The Inquiry found that Mr Juchno also lodged a compliance certificate with incorrect information, leaving the homeowners exposed.

The VBA's Executive Director of Regulatory Operations David Brockman said it is important that drainage is looked at during the building process, because failure to do so could result in leaks and sewage flowing into homes, creeks and waterways.

"Leaking sewage is a significant danger and poses a serious risk to people's health and can cause illnesses like gastroenteritis.

"Not only does it pose serious health risks, but if there is a leak, the drain will need to be dug back up, resulting in added stress and substantial cost," he said.

"Most plumbers do the right thing, but individuals such as Mr Juchno who break the rules erode the public's trust."

Mr Juchno was also suspended for a year, which has been deferred on the condition that he does not breach any provision of the Act for the next 12 months.

He can apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for a review of the decision.

The VBA conducts below-ground sanitary drainage inspections of plumbing work to ensure the work complies with the relevant standards, regulations and local laws.

A compliance certificate is a form of evidence that proves specific plumbing work has been carried out or certified by a licensed practitioner and certifies that the work has been carried out properly.

Victorians can visit vba.vic.gov.au/check to make sure their builder or plumber is registered or licensed.

Media Enquiries:

VBA Media
0417 854 245 or media@vba.vic.gov.au