



Media Release

Thursday, 4 August 2022

Plumber given three-year ban for multiple breaches

A Victorian plumber has had his registration cancelled and been disqualified from re-applying for three years, the statutory maximum, following breaches of the *Building Act 1993*.

Andrew Makdessi (105767) declined to appear before a plumbing disciplinary inquiry following a Victorian Building Authority (VBA) investigation and was dealt with in his absence. The outcome also included more than \$3,200 of penalties.

The inquiry found Mr Makdessi, the owner of Drain Blast Plumbing Service, replaced a 15-metre section of below ground stormwater drain and then removed and reconnected a gas storage hot water heater at an Avondale Heights property, when he wasn't licensed to do so.

The works also required a licensed plumber to issue a compliance certificate, which serves as an important record that helps protect consumers against faulty workmanship.

A compliance certificate can only be issued by a licensed plumber and certifies the work complies with the relevant plumbing standards, codes and regulations. Mr Makdessi was not a licensed plumber.

The inquiry also found Mr Makdessi carried out non-compliant work, by filling the trench dug to replace the 15-metre section of below ground pipework with rocks and pieces of concrete.

The VBA's Executive Director Regulatory Operations David Brockman said the three-year disqualification sent a strong message to those who ignore the rules.

"When practitioners undertake work outside of their registration, they put consumers at risk. We treat this behaviour seriously and will take firm action against those who deliberately do the wrong thing."

"Monetary penalties are important, but a three-year disqualification means Mr Makdessi cannot carry out any plumbing work, or even supervise any plumbing work," Mr Brockman said.

"The vast majority of plumbers do the right thing, it's the small minority who cut corners and ignore the rules who bring the rest of the industry into disrepute."

"Where the VBA becomes aware of serious breaches of the rules, we will be there to hold practitioners accountable," Mr Brockman said.

Mr Makdessi has the right to appeal the VBA's disciplinary decision to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

The VBA has an [online consumer resource portal](#) with information for anyone who experiences issues with builders or plumbers.

To find a licensed or registered practitioner, visit: vba.vic.gov.au/check

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