

Builder fined after failing to obtain permit

A Victorian builder has been fined \$4000 in the Broadmeadows Magistrates Court after being found guilty of installing a shed and pergola without holding a building permit.

Tarneit man Justin Barber was found guilty of carrying out domestic building work at a Pascoe Vale South property under a major domestic building contract when he was not covered by the required insurance under the Building Act 1993.

Mr Barber constructed a shed and pergola in Pascoe Vale South between November 2018 and February 2019 and received various payments totalling \$21,890 to obtain a building permit and to supply all building material required for the construction.

After the shed was built the homeowner asked for a copy of his building permit as well as all warranty and structural guarantee documents but these were not provided.

The Victorian Building Authority's (VBA) Director of Compliance and Enforcement, Rosemary Martin, said it was vital that anyone hiring a builder check that they are registered, or risk being left high and dry.

"Make sure that you do your research and ensure the practitioner you're working with is registered with the VBA and has all the right insurance in place," she said.

"You can go to our website to check their credentials before starting any project, that way you can help avoid any nasty surprises."

A representative from shed and pergola manufacturer Stratco then followed this request up with Mr Barber who produced a fraudulent copy of a building permit.

Repairing or rectifying non-compliant work can also run into the thousands of dollars, putting added financial strain on homeowners.

Mr Barber, trading as All Round Trade Constructions, has never been a registered building practitioner in any class or category with the VBA.

Key warning signs when identifying an unregistered builder include:

- No results are found when you type their name into the VBA's 'Find a Practitioner' tool.
- They cannot or will not show you their VBA ID card – which details who they are and what classes of work they are registered to do.
- They don't provide you with a copy of their domestic building insurance policy or a certificate of currency covering your property before construction begins

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