

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

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## **UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR CONVICTED AND FINED**

A person posing as a licensed builder and registered plumber and electrician has been convicted and ordered to pay fines and costs totalling \$9,000.

**Raymond Bartolo** appeared before the Adelaide Magistrates Court this week in relation to four counts of breaching the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* and two counts of breaching the *Plumbers, Gas Fitters and Electricians Act 1995*.

Mr Bartolo pleaded not guilty but was found guilty of all counts following a trial.

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs launched the investigation following a complaint lodged by a victim of Mr Bartolo's unlicensed and defective work.

The Court was told how Mr Bartolo was engaged under a building contract to construct an extension to an Eden Hills home between 28 September 2007 and 18 December 2007.

Mr Bartolo received substantial payments upfront and then failed to complete the work he was contracted to undertake.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Paul White, said consumers must take extra care when employing contractors and paying for services.

"Consumers need to be diligent in checking the qualifications of contractors, making sure that they protect themselves from financial loss and poor workmanship by checking the trader's licence card to make sure they are appropriately licensed," the Commissioner said.

"In addition, the contractor's licensing details can be checked on the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs website.

"I urge South Australian consumers to report suspect builders, plumbers and electrical workers to Office of Consumer and Business Affairs."

Mr Bartolo's financial situation, and the absence of prior convictions, were considered in sentencing. In convicting Mr Bartolo, the Magistrate imposed a global penalty of \$7,500. He was also ordered to pay \$1,500 in prosecution costs.

The Court also took into account that judgment in the sum of \$28,577 had been awarded against Mr Bartolo in civil proceedings brought by the home owner.

To report concerns about suspected unlicensed builders, or to lodge a complaint, contact OCBA on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for regional callers, or visit [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au).

**Media line: 0422 007 069**