

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

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## **DISHONEST BUILDER DEALT HEFTY FINE**

An unlicensed building work contractor has been convicted and fined in the Holden Hill Magistrates Court after the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) investigated complaints and took action.

Cameron Scott Clarke of Hackney did not attend the Court and the matter was heard in his absence. He was convicted of five counts and fined \$6000 plus over \$800 Court costs.

The offences included carrying out building work without a license, unsatisfactory written contract, failure to provide a Form 1 (terms and conditions), receiving an unauthorised payment and failing to have building indemnity insurance.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mal Hemmerling says it is the small minority who tarnish the reputation of those builders who strive to do the right thing.

“If a builder or tradesperson decides to contract for work they are not licensed to contract for they too may face prosecution action and a substantial fine. The licensing system is in place to protect consumers from building contractors who ignore the law.”

Mr Clarke undertook renovation work at a Highbury residence worth over \$21,000. He requested the consumers pay \$5800 deposit in cash. The money was supposed to be passed on to subcontractors, pay for engineering reports and council applications.

The consumer later discovered the subcontractors had not been paid, nor had Mr Clarke initiated council applications or sourced engineering reports as agreed between the parties.

The renovations were incomplete and the house was nearly unliveable for nine months, leaving the consumers out of pocket and having to find alternative contractors to complete the renovations.

Under the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* persons who contract for domestic building work totalling \$12,000 or more that requires approval under the *Development Act 1993*, must provide the home owner with a certificate of indemnity insurance before building work commences.

For building work of \$12,000 or more, a building work contractor is only allowed to ask for a \$1000 deposit, plus a limited number of third party related charges (if incurred).

“Consumers are also encouraged to do their own research and check the Licensing Public Register to ensure they are contracting a licensed tradesperson or builder.”

“It only takes a few minutes to verify someone’s licence details over the phone or by visiting OCBA’s website [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au).

To report unlicensed activity or substandard work contact OCBA on 8204 9777, or 131 882 for country callers.