

Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and
Business Affairs

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UNLICENSED BUILDER CONVICTED IN ABSENCE

A builder who traded without a licence or a registered business name was found guilty and fined \$5,750 plus court costs in the Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Craig West of Glenelg East did not attend the hearing and the matter was heard in his absence. Mr West carried on business as a builder without holding a license under the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995*. He also advertised under an unregistered business name under the *Business Names Act 1996*.

The Magistrate, Mr Ward found West guilty of all six charges brought against him, imposing a fine for each offence ranging from \$750 to \$2000.

Mr Ward commented that West breached the Acts intentionally and was aware he was working contrary to the law.

The Commissioner for Consumer and Business Affairs, Mal Hemmerling warns that unlicensed builders are a menace to a reputable and necessary industry and drag down builders that are doing the right thing.

"This outcome should serve as a warning to builders and backyard renovators; operating without a licence is a serious offence," the Commissioner said.

"OCBA will pursue and prosecute builders such as Craig West to deter others from considering an illegal operation such as his."

Between 2006 and 2007 West carried on business as a builder under the name "Ceramic & Stone Professional Tilers". West entered into two contracts for work, one of which was quoted for over \$11,000. Neither jobs were completed and the Commissioner warns this is often a consequence of hiring an unlicensed tradesman.

"Unlicensed builders can't be relied upon to get the job done, that's why they don't have a licence."

"Before entering into any sort of contract, do your homework and hire a licensed tradesman to avoid a potential renovation nightmare."

To report unlicensed activity or substandard work contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) on 8204 9777, or 131 882 for regional callers. To verify a person or company is licensed visit the Licensing Public Register at www.ocba.sa.gov.au.