

Thursday, 7 February 2008

UNLICENSED ELECTRICIAN FINED \$24,600

Unlicensed electrician, Paul Anthony Capponi, has been fined \$24,600 plus levies and costs in the Adelaide Magistrates Court this week.

Capponi's licence was cancelled in 2004 due to faulty electrical work and insufficient financial resources to carry on business as an electrical contractor. However, Capponi continued contracting for work and displaying an invalid licence card to unsuspecting customers.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Jennifer Rankine, said, "This recent court ruling and significant penalty sends a strong message to the electrical industry that OCBA and the Courts do not take unlicensed electrical work lightly."

"Electrical work can be very dangerous, therefore it's crucial that only qualified and licensed electricians are engaged to carry out this work. I was alarmed to learn that Mr Capponi continued working as an electrician, despite a court ruling in 2004 when his licence was cancelled for several reasons including faulty electrical work."

"Thankfully, no customers or clients have suffered injury as a result of Capponi's persistence to work as an electrician," Ms Rankine said.

In 1999 Capponi was found to be trading as a licensed electrician whilst bankrupt. He was fined \$400 and reprimanded.

In December 2004 the District Court ruled that Capponi's electrical contractors licence be cancelled; that he be disqualified from being licensed for 10 years; and that his electrical workers registration be suspended if a Wiring Rules course was not successfully completed within 12 months. His worker's registration was subsequently cancelled in December 2005.

Capponi continued to contract for work, and on 5 February 2008 was found guilty of contracting for electrical work without a licence, holding himself out as entitled to carry on business as an electrical contractor whilst not authorised by a licence and performing electrical work without a registration.

"Before hiring the services of a tradesperson, people are urged to check that they are licensed. You should always ask to see the licence card which carries photo identification, and the back of the card that specifies the type of work they are licensed to perform," Ms Rankine said.

It is important to verify that a particular tradesperson is appropriately licensed before agreeing to any work. People should either:

- Check the tradesperson's licence card
- Phone the licensing branch of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs on 8204 9644, or
- Visit the Licensing Public Register at www.ocba.sa.gov.au