

Media Release

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Razor sharp tiling - tradesperson with no licence

Jon Francis Scott did bathroom renovations and tiling jobs. The trouble was, he wasn't licensed and never had been, and his incompetence showed.

He provided verbal quotes and didn't complete tiling work. He left razor sharp tiles, and incorrect drainage, which meant that his customers faced a choice between hefty repair bills and unsafe tiling. In one case he left gaps in tiles that enabled a child to deeply cut one knee.

In the Elizabeth Magistrates Court Jon Francis Scott was found guilty of operating as a building work contractor while being unlicensed. Mr Millard SM recorded a conviction, fined Scott \$4000, and ordered him to pay \$400 in legal costs.

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mark Bodycoat warned consumers to seek written quotes when they were considering hiring tradespeople.

"This is a perfect example of why people should seek more information, particularly written quotes that clearly specify the work to be done, and state the business name and the license number. You should ask for proof that tradespeople are licensed, and, if they can't provide it, deal with someone else."

Consumers can check whether someone is licensed, and what their licence allows them to do, by visiting the Licensing Register on the OCBA website.

In one case, Scott tiled a shower alcove incorrectly, allowing water to flow away from the drain leaving puddles of water and flooding the bathroom floor. The shower floor was also left with razor sharp tiles.

"The licensing system ensures that trades people are suitably qualified and capable of doing certain work. It also allows OCBA to make trades accountable for their work. Consumers should hire a licensed tradesperson for this very reason."

While it was a number of consumer complaints that revealed Scott's conduct, for many unlicensed builders and trades people it is regular monitoring by OCBA that uncovers their activity. OCBA conducts random visits to building sites and checks advertisements to detect people working either unlicensed or outside the scope of their licence.

Mr Bodycoat said, "Builders and trades people need to understand that the licensing system is in place for consumer protection. If they do work that they are not licensed to do then they risk being caught and facing disciplinary action."

To report unlicensed activity or shoddy work contact OCBA on (08) 8204 9777 or 131 882 for country callers. To verify that a person or company is licensed visit the Licensing Public Register at www.ocba.sa.gov.au

Photos of the work are available from Tanya Berryman on 8204 9507.



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