

Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and
Business Affairs

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Electrician's dangerous work leads to permanent cancellation of licence

An electrician who left wiring systems exposed and did not test or inspect electrical installations before putting them to use, has had his licence permanently cancelled.

Mr Allan John Summerton faced disciplinary action in the District Court for being negligent in his electrical work. The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) took action against Summerton after complaints about his dangerous work were forwarded by consumers and the Office of the Technical Regulator (OTR).

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mal Hemmerling, said that Summerton had a blatant disregard for the licensing system, his own responsibilities and the interests of consumers.

"Electrical work is inherently dangerous and Summerton's hazardous work practices put consumers at risk. There is no place for such unprofessional work practices in the industry."

Summerton's unsafe work included: leaving live parts of wiring systems exposed to direct contact; leaving junction boxes and cables unfixed; and single insulated live conductors and earthing conductors not being insulated. In one case he also failed to complete electrical work as contracted.

In addition to his dangerous electrical work, Summerton abused and intimidated OTR and OCBA officers investigating the complaints, and also consumers who did not pay promptly. On one occasion he threatened Police, (who were accompanying a consumer making payment) with a weapon.

"Consumers are encouraged to contact the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs when they are concerned with the quality of work performed by a tradesperson. Complaints are investigated to ensure tradespeople are completing work in a safe manner."

Contact OCBA on (08) 8204 9644 or visit the Licensing Public Register at www.ocba.sa.gov.au to check whether a person is appropriately licensed or to find a licensed tradesperson in a local area.

As a result of the Court orders, Summerton can no longer contract for electrical work. He is also unable to work as an electrician for another trader as his worker's registration has been cancelled, until Summerton can show that he meets the requirements to be entitled for registration as an electrical worker.

"The licensing system aims to make sure that only people who are suitably qualified can work in South Australia. The system is designed to protect consumers from operators like Mr Summerton."