

# Media Release



Government of South Australia

Office of Consumer and  
Business Affairs

## Education and Information Services

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## TILER CONVICTED

**A repeat offender has been convicted for performing tiling work without a licence and advertising using a false license number.**

**Mr Steven Carpenter** pleaded guilty in the Adelaide Magistrates Court to charges brought by the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs. Mr Carpenter was charged with one count of carrying on business as a building work contractor without a licence between January 2008 to April 2009 and 3 counts of falsely advertising in the *Southern Times* that he was entitled to carry on business as a building work contractor and using a fictitious licence number in the advertisement.

Mr Carpenter was convicted and fined \$4,000. Due to his financial circumstances the penalty was converted to 300 hours of community service. He was also ordered to pay compensation to the consumers involved which amounted to \$4,273.51, prosecution costs of \$800 and the Victim of Crime Levy.

One couple contracted the defendant to tile the passageway, kitchen and dining room floors of their home. They paid \$584 for the tiles, approximately \$2,000 for Mr Carpenter's tiling work and \$350 for a report by the Australian Tile Council to assess the damage.

Consequently, the sub-standard tiling work had to be re-done, with quotes to fix the job ranging from \$2,670 to \$8,780.

"This conviction serves as a reminder to builders that they must adhere to their obligations under the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995*, or face the consequences," said Acting Consumer Affairs Commissioner Anne Gale.

OCBA launched an investigation following complaints lodged by the victims of the unlicensed business.

The investigation identified that Mr Carpenter was at no time licensed under the *Building Work Contractors Act 1995* to carry on business as a building work contractor.

"I urge South Australian consumers to report suspect builders to OCBA," the Acting Commissioner said.

"Such wrongdoing may not only incur significant financial loss to the victims but is also damaging to the industry as a whole through bad publicity causing honest competitors to suffer commercial disadvantage."

"Consumers can protect themselves by checking a trader's licence card to make sure they are actually qualified to do the job you are engaging them to do," Ms Gale said.

This was not the first time Mr Carpenter appeared before the court in relation to such offending. In 1997, the Commissioner initiated disciplinary action against Mr Carpenter in relation complaints made about similar conduct. Mr Carpenter was fined \$600 and disqualified from seeking or obtaining a licence for four years.

“Repeat offenders and any blatant disregard for our building laws will not be tolerated,” the Acting Commissioner said.

To report concerns about suspected unlicensed builders, or to lodge a complaint, contact OCBA on 8204 9777 or 131 882 for regional callers, or visit [www.ocba.gov.au](http://www.ocba.gov.au).

**Media line: 0422 007 069**