

Media Release

For general release

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Man fined for pretending to be registered builder

A man has been fined after the Victorian Building Authority prosecuted him for fraudulently using a registered builder's details to obtain a building permit and domestic building insurance.

The man, who is the director of a construction company, has never been a registered builder. Despite this, he entered into a contract to carry out a home extension in Bentleigh in April 2010. He then forged the signature of a registered building practitioner, who had no involvement with the job, to apply for building insurance and provided false information to obtain a building permit for the work.

Director of Compliance and Performance, Murray Smith, said the VBA investigated the matter immediately after the registered practitioner made a complaint that someone was using his details to apply for insurance and a building permit.

"The investigation revealed that the man had also entered into contracts with other homeowners to carry out building work at two other sites in 2010," Mr Smith said.

In May, the man appeared in the Moorabbin Magistrates' Court, where he and his company were found guilty of 10 charges in relation to building work at three sites. The charges included:

- carrying out building work without being a registered building practitioner
- not having the required insurance
- providing false information to the relevant building surveyor
- carrying out building work not in accordance with the building permit
- not notifying the relevant building surveyor after completing a mandatory notification stage of the building work.

The director was fined \$40,000, while his company was fined \$25,000 and ordered to pay court costs.

"Any Victorian wanting to carry out domestic building work that costs more than \$5000 must use a registered builder. The VBA encourages consumers to verify that their builder is registered by asking to see their official Building Practitioners Board registration card, or by performing a search on the VBA website," Mr Smith said.

Visit www.vba.vic.gov.au to use the online eToolbox function to confirm a builder's registration details or contact the VBA on 1300 815 127.

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Media enquiries

Senior Communications Advisor – Larissa Bell – 03 9618 9330 - larissa.bell@vba.vic.gov.au

Communications Manager – Kate Volard – 0418 271 988 (after hours)