

Successful prosecution by Bath & North East Somerset Council's Building Control section

A bathroom fitter has been fined a total of £1,500 after pleading guilty to breaking regulations aimed at preventing unsafe work following an investigation by Bath & North East Somerset Council's Building Control department.

The section prosecuted Roger Martin Drinkwater, born 1 March, 1956, (who trades as Salles de Bains) from Tarrant Cottage, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, for contravening Building Regulations with regard to the electrics in a replacement bathroom at a private property in the Bath and North East Somerset area.

The charges were brought under Part P of Building Regulations. These rules came into force in January 2005 and are designed to reduce the number of death, injuries and fires caused by faulty electrics. They are also designed to make it harder for contractors to carry out sub-standard work.

In this instance the defendant installed an electric shower but was not a qualified electrician. The method of wiring used was not in accordance with the British Standard. Also, while the installation of the electric shower was incomplete, the complainant was not advised that it should not be used or that it was awaiting checking. The complainant was eventually provided with a certificate from a suitably qualified electrician but only after insisting on this.

Mr Drinkwater pleaded guilty at a hearing at Bath Magistrates Court to three charges. He was fined £1,000 for the Part P offence and £250 each for the remaining two offences. The other two offences were that Mr Drinkwater failed to give a Building Notice to the Council prior to commencement of the work and he failed to give notice of commencement and completion of certain stages of the work. The purpose of these requirements is to enable qualified Building Control Surveyors to visit the site and ensure that the Regulations are being complied with and provide advice if necessary.

The court also ordered Mr Drinkwater to pay £1,066 in costs.

Cllr Vic Pritchard, Executive Member Community Safety and Housing, said: "These regulations are designed to reduce the number of people killed or injured by faulty electrics as well as make sure contractors carry out work to an agreed standard.

"This prosecution is evidence that Bath & North East Somerset Council takes seriously its role in ensuring the safety of residents and enforcing building regulations."

Philip Mansfield, Building Control Manager, said: "Bath & North East Somerset Council always recommends that people employ electricians who are members of a recognised electrical competent persons scheme to carry out any work for them.

“Residents can obtain details of the competent persons schemes from the council’s building control section.

“If people are at all unsure about any aspect of work they are considering carrying out on their home or work that has been completed then please give us a call.”

Ends

Notes for editors:

The case was heard at Bath Magistrates Court on 31 January.

Part P of Building Regulations requires that “reasonable provision shall be made in the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations in order to protect persons from fire or injury”.

To get further advice about the building regulations in relation to electrical work please contact Building Control on 01225 477517/8 or email building_control@bathnes.gov.uk or look at the Building Control web pages on www.bathnes.gov.uk

Alternatively people can get information on electrical safety in the home by visiting www.odpm.gov.uk/electricalsafety

For more information please contact:

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For comment please contact:

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