

Illegal gas work left at risk in a Devon home

A self-employed electrician has been sentenced after conducting gas work he was not registered or competent to do.

Exeter Magistrates' Court heard that Gareth Symons, of Gareth C Symons Electrical Services, quoted for a refurbishment of the client's property in Exmouth. The job included gas works for which Mr Symons employed a fitter, who fitted a new gas boiler and fittings in August 2016 but did not complete the installation. After the client complained about the reliability of the fitter, Symons went to the property and completed the required work to ensure the gas boiler was working.

When the client smelled gas, she contacted Wales & West Utilities who found faults with the fittings and advised the boiler should not be used. The client attempted to contact Mr Symons for him to come back to correct the faults, but no response was received. An inspector from Gas Safe Register later inspected the work and found numerous defects on the installation and issued a warning notice.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found Mr Symons was not and never has been a member of Gas Safe Register. He was not registered or competent to undertake gas work.

Gareth Symons of Madison Close, Stoke Canon, Exeter pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 3(3) and 33(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to a 12-month suspended custodial order with 210 hours of unpaid work and ordered to pay costs of £7979.90.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Paul Mannell said: "Mr Symons undertook gas work but was not and never has been a member of the Gas Safe Register. Furthermore, immediately following completion of the installation, he failed to test the connection to the installation pipework to verify that it was gas tight and examine the appliance in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

"All gas work must be completed by a registered, and therefore HSE approved, Gas Safe engineer to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life."

Further information about gas safety can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/>

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. hse.gov.uk^[1]
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at:

www.legislation.gov.uk/^[2]

3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>^[3]

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