

Unregistered gas fitter fined for dangerous installation of range cooker at care home

A fitter has been fined following a gas leak from a newly fitted range installed in a North Devon residential care home.

Exeter Crown Court heard that on 24 December 2020, Mark Whitham undertook the installation of the new gas range cooker after damaging the existing gas cooker whilst fitting out a new kitchen. Over the next 24 hours staff at the care home experienced problems with the operation of the cooker and contacted their usual Gas Safe Registered engineer. He found a substantial gas leak from the gas supply connection to the cooker.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Mr Whitham was not registered with the Gas Safe Register. The manufacturer's installation paperwork that came with the appliance when purchased, made numerous references to correct installation by a qualified engineer and numerous references to compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, however these instructions were not followed.

Mark Whitham of Fallow Fields, Barnstaple Devon, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(1) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and Regulation 22(1)(a) of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment for each offence, suspended for 12 months. He was also ordered to undertake 120 hours unpaid work and to pay £2,000 costs.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Simon Jones said: "Mark Whitham undertook gas work, which he knew he was not registered to do. In this case Mark Whitham's unregistered gas work put the lives of vulnerable people at real risk from fire and explosion.

"All gas work must be carried out by Gas Safe registered engineers to ensure the highest standards are met to prevent injury and loss of life."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We seek to prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. [hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk)
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: [legislation.gov.uk/](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/)
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

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