

West Midlands man handed suspended sentence for unregistered gas work

An unregistered gas fitter was handed a 26-month suspended sentence for carrying out gas work after his Gas Safe Registration had been removed and he had been prohibited from carrying out further work on gas appliances and fittings.

Coventry Magistrates' Court heard that 71-year-old Harcharan Singh Sembi continued to carry out unsafe work on gas appliances despite having been removed from the Gas Safe Register and prohibited from doing further gas work by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

An investigation by the HSE found that Mr Sembi was removed from the Gas Safe Register for failing to meet competency standards. Despite this, he continued to carry out unsafe work on gas appliances despite it being an offence to work without Gas Safe Registration and in contravention of an enforcement notice.

Mr Harcharan Singh Sembi of William Groubb Close, Coventry, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 3(3) of the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) 1998 Regulations and was sentenced to 12 months in custody, suspended for two years. Mr Sembi also pleaded guilty to breaching Section 33 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and was sentenced to 14 months in custody, suspended for two years. He was also ordered to undertake 40 hours of unpaid work.

In his sentencing remarks, HHJ Potter commented that Mr Sembi's offences were so serious that he would have imposed an immediate custodial sentence if his personal circumstances had been different. The defendant's age and the circumstances around the support available to his elderly wife were factors taken into consideration by the Judge in concluding that a suspended sentence was proportionate.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Karl Raw commented: "Harcharan Sembi undertook gas work which he knew he was not registered to do.

"All gas work must be done by registered Gas Safe 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. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found

at: www.legislation.gov.uk/

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

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.