



Media Release

Consumer and Business Affairs

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HOME OWNER DRAINED BY SHODDY WORK

Consumer Affairs Commissioner Richard O'Sullivan has warned Territory home owners to thoroughly check out their contractors before hiring them to undertake home renovation or maintenance.

Consumer Affairs has reported an unacceptably high number of enquiries and complaints relating to shoddy work by home renovation, maintenance and building contractors.

"The complaints range from poor workmanship and damage to other fittings, to work not done according to quote, with some contractors showing little interest in fixing problems or delaying the repair work unnecessarily. It's a disappointing occurrence and reflects poorly on the industry as a whole," Mr O'Sullivan said.

"Of course, there are some excellent, well-reputed, hard working contractors but sadly they are tarnished by those who are causing these problems."

Recent cases involve:

- Poorly-constructed spoon drains that direct water the wrong way;
- Installation of sliding doors without a building permit;
- Roof damage caused by the contractor when installing a satellite dish.

Before undertaking renovation work, Consumer Affairs advises home owners to:

- seek references for previous work – if the contract won't provide these, look for an alternative;
- ensure specifications are clearly written down and agreed to by both parties; and
- draw up a contract which includes the specifications, the quote for the entire job, any money to be paid 'up front', the start and proposed finish dates and amounts to be paid at any stages.

Consumers should also regularly check the work's progress and bring any concerns to the contractor's attention, preferably in writing. Contract changes must be in writing and signed by both parties and receipts should be kept for all monies paid.

CONTACT: Richard O'Sullivan on 8999 5042.

NOTE: disgruntled home owner from example given also available for interview via Consumer Affairs.
