

Press Release

CER Secures Three Criminal Convictions against Unregistered Gas Installers

Friday, 4 December 2015: The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER), Ireland's independent energy regulator, has secured a further three successful prosecutions in the Four Courts in Dublin related to gas safety against unregistered and illegally operating gas installers.

The prosecutions were obtained against those illegally undertaking gas works while not registered or falsely portraying themselves as registered when they were not.

It is illegal to carry out work on gas within the home unless registered with Registered Gas Installers Ireland (RGII), which oversee the work of Registered Gas Installers (RGI's) with respect to safety on behalf of the CER.

The first prosecution was Boiler Gas Services from County Dublin for illegally portraying itself as a Registered Gas Installer. At the time, Boiler Gas Services was not registered on the Register of Gas Installers of Ireland and therefore committed an offence under the Electricity Regulation Act, 1999.

CER also secured a prosecution against the owner of the company, Mr Tony Stirrat of Lucan, Dublin for illegally portraying himself as a Registered Gas Installer. The Judge at Dublin District Court imposed a criminal conviction and fines of €500 on both parties and to pay €1000 in costs.

In addition, the CER successfully prosecuted an individual, Mr Larry Boyle of Navan, Co. Meath for portraying himself as a Registered Gas Installer and had undertaken works while no registered. The Judge imposed a criminal conviction and issued a fine of €500 and instructed him to pay €1000 in costs.

There are over 3,000 Registered Gas Installers in Ireland. By using an RGI, consumers can have confidence that they are dealing with a competent installer who has the required expertise in gas safety to ensure their gas installation is safe. The work carried out by an RGI is also insured and is inspected by RGII on an annual basis.

The number of prosecutions taken by the CER has continued to rise annually since 2011, with 20 successful prosecutions prior to today's announcement, and a further three currently awaiting final court appearances. Under legislation, individuals who are successfully prosecuted can face a fine of up to €5,000 or €15,000, with the potential of additional imprisonment of up to six months or three years.

The successful prosecutions emphasise the requirement by law for all gas installers to be registered with RGII before carrying out any gas works relating to domestic gas appliances, for example in homes, or else face prosecution.

The CER's objective in this area is to protect life and property, deliver the safety regulatory system to oversee the industry, build awareness levels of the issues among consumers and the general public and to prosecute unregistered individuals or companies where required. CER investigates all reports of alleged breaches of legislation. Illegal activity can be reported anonymously to CER or to RGII (www.RGII.ie or calling 1850 454 454)

The CER's Commissioner for Energy Safety, Dr. Paul McGowan said:

"If a gas installer does not have the required registration or cannot prove membership of the RGII scheme, consumers should not use them and if they suspect that they are acting illegally, they should contact RGII. The CER will continue to pursue such cases against individuals and companies who do not observe the legal requirements for undertaking gas installations or works".

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Note to Editors:

1. Under the Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 the CER has responsibility to regulate the activities of gas undertakings and gas installers with respect to safety. The CER appointed the Register of Gas Installers Ireland (RGII) to carry out this function on its behalf. Any person wishing to carry out Gas Works (as defined under Statutory Instrument 225/2009 and 299/2011) is required by law to register as a Registered Gas Installer (RGI) with RGII

2. Please visit CER website at www.cer.ie for further information on CER's safety responsibilities