



Media Release

Windsor Contractor Convicted for
Endangering Family

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Court imposes \$10,000 fine for unlawful activity

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Toronto, ON, July 20, 2016) – The Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) successfully prosecuted Windsor contractor Mark Van Wattegham for using a damaged fuel appliance, failing to turn off the gas to an unsafe appliance, and placing an entire family at risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

In January 2014, Mr. Van Wattegham was called to service a gas furnace that had been shut off by another gas technician at a residential home in Windsor due to a crack in the heat exchanger, which poses a significant CO hazard. Mr. Van Wattegham failed to appreciate this danger, turned the gas back on to the appliance, advised the owners that an unrelated repair might be needed, told them to purchase a CO detector, and left the home with the furnace running.

The family was saved days later when, after installing a CO detector, its alarm immediately sounded.

Mr. Van Wattegham was convicted by the Ontario Court of Justice in Windsor for using a fuel appliance that was in a hazardous condition and failing to turn off the gas to a hazardous appliance, contrary to the Natural Gas and Propane Installation Code ([Ontario Regulation 212/01](#)). The court fined Mr. Van Wattegham \$10,000, plus the mandatory 25% victim surcharge for a total penalty of \$12,500, taking into account that the contractor had no prior convictions.

“This was a near miss for a potentially deadly CO scenario,” said John Marshall, Director of TSSA’s Fuels Safety Program. “Mr. Van Wattegham and all other TSSA-certified fuel technicians have a professional and legal responsibility to keep up-to-date with all safety codes and standards and be aware of the risks associated with a damaged fuel-fired appliances and know the proper precautions to ensure public safety.”

About TSSA

The Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) is Ontario’s public safety regulator mandated by the Government of Ontario to enforce provincial safety regulations and enhance public safety. Throughout Ontario, TSSA regulates the safety of amusement devices, boilers and pressure vessels, elevating devices, fuels, operating engineers, ski lifts, and upholstered and stuffed articles. Its range of safety services include public education and consumer information, certification, licensing and registration, engineering design review, inspections, investigations, safety management consultation, and enforcement and prosecution activities. The organization’s vision is to be a valued advocate and recognized authority in public safety.

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For more information on the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, please visit www.tssa.org.