

Gas bottles a 'ticking timebomb'

By ANDREA VANCE

AN UNLICENSED gasfitter has been fined the maximum \$10,000 penalty for incorrectly installing 32 gas bottles just metres from a primary school.

The 45kg LPG bottles, put into an Auckland laundromat, were a "ticking timebomb" and were stored close to a number of sources of ignition.

Mountain View Primary School is directly opposite the Boost Personality laundromat in Mangere.

Arman Faraji Bekhtereri, of Avondale, was fined \$10,000 in the Manukau District Court last week.

Bekhtereri has a previous conviction from 2008 for carrying out plumbing without a licence, and was fined \$8000. The fine has not been paid.

Although Bekhtereri was granted a licence in 2004, it has expired and was not renewed, the court heard.

He evaded prosecution for months, telling investigators he was dead and then skipping the country.

The Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drain-



Bekhtereri: Fined \$10,000.

layers Board, which regulates the trade and brings prosecutions, hired private investigators to tail him when a neighbour revealed he was back in New Zealand.

Kern Uren, acting registrar of the board, said people would have been

killed if the bottles had exploded.

"This judgement reflects the serious nature of this offence and represents the maximum fine that could be imposed.

"There was a clear and present danger of an LPG explosion potentially causing serious loss of life and injury.

"Not only do unlicensed gasfitters place consumers in harm's way with their poor skills, but they devalue the trade and its legacy."

Consumers should always ask workmen for their licence card. Once gasfitting is done, a compliance certificate should be issued, he said.

Bekhtereri, also known as Bekhtevvari, trades under A & V Engineering Ltd and has a vehicle licensed to A & V Limited in New Lynn.

He could not be contacted for comment.

The number listed for A & V Engineering Ltd is no longer in service.