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A shop owner has been heavily fined after pleading guilty to selling counterfeit and illegal cigarettes and tobacco.

Mahmoud Akhbary (50) of Park Lane, Peterborough, pleaded guilty to eight offences at a hearing Peterborough Magistrates' Court on 4 September.

The offences related to incorrect labelling on the cigarette and tobacco packaging which did not conform to UK standards.

A total of 17,040 illegal cigarettes and 1,650 grams of rolling tobacco were seized from Akhbary's store - Bakhtar Groceries in Elmfield Road, Peterborough, by officers from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards on 27 November 2018.

Akhbary was fined £600 and ordered to pay £500 in costs as well as a victim surcharge of £60.

Peter Gell, head of regulatory services at Peterborough City Council, said: "We take the sale of illegal cigarettes and tobacco extremely seriously. Our priority is the protection of the public. Illegal cigarettes and tobacco pose serious health risks because the ingredients are not regulated properly, and in cases where duty hasn't been paid, legitimate businesses will be out of pocket.

"I hope this latest successful prosecution will act as a warning to other traders selling counterfeit goods in our city that we will do everything in our power to protect the safety and rights of our residents."

To report an issue to Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Trading Standards team call 01733 747474 or email trading_standards@peterborough.gov.uk.