

May 2013

Consumer Alerts

Doorstep Incidents

Consumers have reported door-to-door fish sellers, usually using an unmarked white van. They do not appear to be regular sellers. Trading Standards advice is never buy this type of product from door-to-door sellers who are not regular rounds men. You may not get the weight, quality or hygiene standards you are expecting.

There have been several reports of a man selling poor quality watches and clothing at very high prices out of the boot of his car. The man often approaches people in the street or in their garden and sometimes makes contact by offering the person a lift.

The slightly better weather seems to have brought out the bogus roofers. There have been numerous reports of people being cold called by traders who say they have noticed the roof needs attention. Often little or no work is done and any that is completed is of very poor quality.

There have been similar calls about traders who cold call and offer to do work on the driveway. Again, consumers are charged large amounts and any work that is done is of very poor quality.

Trading Standards advice is never deal with traders who cold call. If you want help finding a reputable trader visit our Safe Trader Scheme website www.safetrader.org.uk or contact Help Direct on 0303 333 1111.

Unsolicited Telephone Calls

The reports of unsolicited telephone calls about Council Tax rebates continue. The trader often tries to make an appointment to visit the consumer at home.

Trading Standards advice is if you choose to employ someone to handle a council tax appeal for you, be aware that you are likely to be charged a fee for any work carried out, even if this only involves giving advice and information. Please make sure you fully understand the terms of any contract before you sign it. For further information about Council Tax banding see <https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/working-out-your-council-tax> or contact your local council.

There have also been several reports of scam lottery wins. The caller says they are from the Spanish Euromillions Lottery. The caller asked for bank account details. In another instance the caller said they were from a Fun Lottery and asked the consumer to call at a local bank to claim their prize. They are told to have their account details with them. Fortunately, the consumer became suspicious and did not try to claim the prize.

Trading Standards advice is never respond to phone calls like this.

Contact the Trading Standards Service via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 08454 04 05 06