

The following was sent to all Home Watch Co-ordinators/Community Contacts in Cheshire West & Chester Area

Please pass this information to family members, friends, neighbours and anyone you think may be vulnerable.

Date 25.1.2013

THE FOLLOWING HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM TRADING STANDARDS, PLEASE SHARE WIDELY

There have been a number of incidents reported to Trading Standards where householders have been approached on the door step by traders offering to carry out gutter cleaning and roof repairs on their property.

Advice from Trading Standards

Do not do business with anyone who knocks on your door and offers to carry out work, as you may end up paying more than you thought you had agreed to. Professional-looking leaflets are not always a good indication of the quality of the workmanship.

Traders who call uninvited are nearly always untraceable after work, **typically of appalling quality**, has been done and payment made. These people can be very persuasive and will target the most vulnerable members of the community, who can easily be frightened into believing immediate work is necessary when in fact there may be no work required at all.

Trading Standards would always advise consumers to obtain a few quotes before instructing a trader to carry out work. Maybe talk to family and friends who have recently had work carried out to a good standard, as recommendations are generally a good indicator.

Should you engage with a trader by way of a cold call, you should be given, in writing, the right to cancel the contract within 7 days. This is generally referred to as a cooling-off period.

Please be cautious, as cowboy traders will exploit any incidents of recent bad weather to sell roofing and guttering work and other property repairs. If you have any suspicions regarding work being carried out at neighbouring properties and think the owner may have been pressurised, please get in touch with Trading Standards.

You can also contact Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 08454 040506, or visit <http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/>.

Alternatively, call the Police on 101.

If you need to report an incident as an emergency, please contact the Police by dialling 999.

If you wish to pass information via an independent, anonymous source, you can call crime stoppers on 0800 555 111, or contact them through www.crimestoppers-uk.org