

TS Alert Message from Kent Trading Standards

Sent By (include Name, Address and Contact Details)

Trading Standards, Advice and Education, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 8XU
Telephone 01233 652385
www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent

Message

Kent Trading Standards have received reports concerning a company offering free benefits advice. Although the advice is free there is a cost to this service. If consumers contact the company then they will visit the consumer in their home and fill out forms on their behalf, with regards to any benefits they may be entitled to.

The company work on the basis that they will take 45% of any back pay monies due to the consumer. This means consumers could end up paying the company considerable sums of money out of benefits that were due to them. The operation of these businesses is legal, but we wish to remind Kent Residents that the same advice is available for free from other agencies such as Citizen's Advice.

Kent Trading Standards is advising consumers to be wary of giving out any personal information over the telephone and to take their time to find out about free advice before agreeing to the service any business offers.

If you have been approached by the company you can also report the matter to Trading Standards on 08454 04 05 06.

Trading Standards operate a Buy With Confidence scheme so if you are thinking of having work done to your property visit www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk or call Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 to find a trader who has been vetted by Trading Standards.

Transmission Date

11th December 2009

This message is valid for 30 days following transmission or expires on
The normal period for validity of messages will be seven days

Distribution

Messages are not confidential and can be used for public distribution

Signed

Elizabeth Tidy

Date

08/12/09

TS Alert Message from Kent Trading Standards

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Telephone 01233 652385
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Message

Incident Date

4th December 2009

Area

Higham, Gravesend

Target

Residents of the Higham / Gravesend area

Description of People/Vehicles Involved

Young female in her 20's, presentable, with short hair and no noticeable accent.
No vehicle details.

Description of Incident

This female was cold-calling and offering to sell kitchen knives and saucepans. She claimed that a local pub had ordered too many, so she was offering them to sell them to local residents. She was very unclear when questioned about which pub was involved.

What action should be taken (please indicate whether or not a response is requested and include clear contact details where appropriate)

Residents are reminded to take care when dealing with traders who call at their home addresses.

The new **Cancellation of Contracts Made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work etc. Regulations 2008** apply to any contact made between a consumer and trader at the consumers home or place of work, which is for a total payment of more than £35. Consumers have a right to a 'cooling off' period and may cancel the contract within seven calendar days. These cancellation rights need to be clearly displayed in any written contact, or provided in writing if no contact is given.

Please contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or go to www.consumerdirect.gov.uk if you need further advice on your consumer rights, or you want to report any traders you have concerns about.

Attachments (Please list)

none

Expiry Date

16th December

This message is to remain valid for 7 days following transmission
The normal period for validity of messages will be seven days

Distribution

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Signed

Rebecca Collier

Date

9th December 2009

TS Alert Message from Kent Trading Standards

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Telephone 01233 652385
www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent

Message

Residents across Kent are advised to be cautious of a trader cold-calling at homes, offering to sell a security door alarm, which fits to the back of an exterior door. The trader reported has used verbal pressure in his approach, and has asked to be allowed entry to homes to fit the alarms. It is suspected that they may also have indicated they are recommended by the local council.

A description given of this man is :

Around 45 years old, thick set, 5 feet 7 to 8, wearing black, black canvas shoulder bag, sandy hair colour, local accent.

Please be careful not to allow someone to enter your home without first checking their identity is correct, if necessary by telephoning their employer. Any legitimate business employee should be happy for you to do this, will carry proper identification, and will allow you to ask them to return at a later date.

Always use a door chain when answering to an unknown caller, and do not accept any goods or services that you do not require. Note that any goods or services priced above £35 require a written cancellation notice to be issued allowing you seven days within which to change your mind and cancel the contract.

If you or someone you know receives a visit from any trader in this manner, please report it to Consumer Direct on 08454 040506, and if concerned about your security or personal safety, please also inform Kent Police on 01622 690690.

Transmission Date

11th December

This message is valid for 14 days following transmission or expires on
The normal period for validity of messages will be seven days

Distribution

Messages are not confidential and can be used for public distribution

Signed

Caroline Elliott

Date

10/12/09