

Consumer Alerts – December 2024

Cold callers offering tree services

A vulnerable resident in the Lancaster area agreed to cold callers offering to cut back some shrubs. The traders then escalated the job to include work to the back garden increasing the price to over £7000 and became intimidating when the householder would not pay. Remember you have 14 days to cancel a contract if you agreed to the contract in your own home. You can cancel even if the work started straight away, but you may need to pay for any work carried out.

Beware persistent sales people

Reports of salespeople cold calling offering double glazing have been received by the Service. The sales staff have in one case stayed with the householder for over 3 hours, in another case the seller was pushy and persistent.

If you are looking for a double glazing provider, do your own research before you chose a business to carry out the work. Never feel pressurised into agreeing to a contract. Remember, if you agree to a contract for goods made to your specifications in your own home you may not be provided with cancellation rights, although many double glazing businesses give 7 days. Always read the contract before signing.

Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers. The Safetrader scheme can help you find a trader in your area, contact 0303 333 1111 or go to www.safetrader.org.uk.

Scam living allowance text

Beware receiving a text claiming to be from the British Government stating that the 'living allowance from 2022 to 2024 has entered the countdown'. The text then wishes the subsidy brings you warmth. Do not click on the bogus, scam link, or reply to the text, the scammers may try obtain personal details.

Scam parcel delivery texts and emails

At this busy time of year make sure you keep track of online orders and parcels that you are expecting to be delivered to your home. Be on the alert for scam texts or emails claiming to be from a delivery company to reschedule or pay additional delivery fees, or false tracking information being given for parcels that never arrive.

Scam texts can be reported, for free, to the National Cyber Security Centre by forwarding it to 7726.

Online shopping scams

With the festive season nearly upon us, avoid getting caught by fake social media listings or fake websites who try to trick you into paying for goods or services that don't exist. Such scams often offer DIY equipment or electronic devices at very low prices to tempt you.

Remember, for purchases over £100, paying by credit card will provide greater protection.

Contact the Trading Standards Service via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133

