



Neighbourhood Watch



POLICE INCIDENT REPORT

Date 1st July 2010.

Rogue traders are a menace and, although we don't have a particular problem in our District, every now and again an incident rears its head and when it does it usually means a victim has forfeited a substantial amount of cash. They are difficult to prosecute for any criminal offence because the victim normally hands the money over willingly but Trading standards have had some notable successes in prosecuting rogue traders.

Rogue traders prey on the elderly and vulnerable, often conning them out of vast sums of money for work that is substandard, unnecessary and overpriced. In some cases no work has been carried out at all. Rogue traders can have seriously adverse effects on a victim's health and confidence once the scam is uncovered.

The message is simple: if you're not sure don't open the door. If you are suspicious of them or they are persistent call 999 immediately. Essex Police is committed to dealing robustly with rogue traders and we would rather have a call that turns out to be genuine rather than no call at all.

Last year's national Rogue Trader operation saw nearly 200 people arrested, £200,000 worth of property recovered, 1800 companies checked and over 10,500 vehicles inspected.

Police and trading standards give the following key crime prevention advice to protect against rogue traders and bogus callers:

- **Never engage the services of a cold calling tradesperson.**
- **Don't be hurried or frightened into employing their services.**
- **If you require the services of a tradesperson, ask for recommendation from family or friends.**
- **Get three written quotes before choosing a trader.**
- **Check whether traders are members of the Local Authority Assured Trader Schemes (www.oft.gov.uk) or the government Trust Mark scheme (www.trustmark.org.uk).**
- **Never pay cash upfront.**
- **If you suspect a rogue trader caller is at your door dial 999.**

Please play your part by keeping an eye on elderly and vulnerable residents in your community. If you think they are being targeted by a rogue trader call us immediately.

If you see any suspicious or unusual activity around your neighbourhood or have any information which you think might be of help, please call Essex Police on 0300 333 4444.

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