



Information Network Bulletin

August 2008



 brought to you by Croydon Trading Standards 



Distraction Burglars:

The team of two white males are still operating in the north of Croydon and claiming to have detained a burglar; they called on two victims and claimed that a male had just broken into the property through a window. They asked to see the victim's cash and the elderly victim showed them cash in his wallet, they then claimed they would take it to the police outside, when the victim objected they struggled with him and then ran off with the money.

This team of distraction burglars have been operating in Croydon for some time and it is important to impress on any elderly person that they must be aware of this scam and that if they have any suspicions then the police need to be informed immediately.

The Police do not check your personal cash or need to see it, if they have made an arrest outside your property. **DO NOT LET THEM IN**, use your door chain and if the caller wants to come in and is not wearing police uniform or showing a Warrant Card with the Met Police metal badge visible on it just say 'NO' and lock the door then phone 999 immediately.

Tarmac Gangs and Others doing door to door, offering building and repair work:

Someone knocks on your door claiming to be working in the area, saying they have some tarmac and can surface your drive at a cut-price rate. Or they may say they notice you have a loose tile or need some other work doing.

They can be quite charming in their attempts to get you to agree to the work, but they may be threatening when the time comes to pay. Some go as far as driving elderly people to the bank so they can withdraw more money.

A few months later, when there are weeds coming through the tarmac or the roof is leaking, the traders have vanished and there is little hope of finding them. Typically they target those less able to check the quality of work done, people they think could be intimidated and who they believe won't complain.

Do not buy from doorstep traders however convincing they seem. Contact Trading Standards or Consumer Direct if they are targeting people in your area.

Success for Trading Standards and Police at Valley Park:

Trading Standards and police saw off two itinerant traders who were attempting to scam unsuspecting shoppers at Valley Park recently by offering them cut price plasma TVs. When approached the men drove off at speed without having secured a deal, leaving a trail of potential customers in their wake. Trading Standards warn shoppers to beware of such apparent bargains.

We have in the past seized TVs such as these from traders and on closer inspection the televisions have been found to be broken or empty of any internal workings at all. **Remember:** If it seems too good to be true then it probably is.

Report all sightings to Trading Standards on 020 8407 1311 immediately.



Digital Television Telephone Scam:

East Sussex Trading Standards have reported that scams surrounding the change over to digital TV have started to come to light. One of their local electrical retailers has reported the cold calling.

An elderly man in the Eastbourne area was cold called in August. It was a recorded message stating that the analogue service was being switched off tomorrow & they gave a telephone number to call for more information.

This was a scam - on further investigation it was realised that the phone number given to the consumer was a premium rate number.

Switchover will start in the Meridian and London TV regions in 2011 & 2012.

For more information go to:
www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk
www.digitaluk.co.uk
or call 08456 50 50 50

Eventually, you need to make sure every TV set in your home is ready for switchover. You will be told nearer the time the exact date for the switchover and further information will be sent well in advance to help consumers get ready for the switchover.

If you have any information about this scam or anything similar or feel that you may be a victim of a scam please contact **Consumer Direct 08454 04 05 06** or go online to www.consumerdirect.gov.uk.



Try our quiz and test you're Knowledge on consumer law!

The subject of this editions quiz is holiday law:

1. If you see a holiday advertised in a travel agent's window but when you attempt to book it you are told it is not available, then the agent tries to sell you something more expensive, why should you report it to Consumer Direct/Trading Standards?

The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 ban the practice of making an invitation to purchase products (this includes services) at a specified price without disclosing the existence of any reasonable grounds the trader might have for believing he/she will not be able to offer for supply or to procure another trader to supply.

2. If you have booked a Package Holiday but find yourself unable to travel due to illness which provision of the Package Travel Regulations 1992 might help you?

Regulation 10 provides that where you are prevented from proceeding with the package you may transfer the booking to another person who satisfies all the conditions applicable to the package, provided that you give reasonable notice to the operator before the date when departure is due to take place.

3. If a friend goes in your place who is responsible for paying the outstanding balance and any additional costs?

You are both liable for the outstanding sums and additional costs.

4. Once a price is agreed for a holiday the tour operator can only make increases in respect of which specified costs?

The price can only be increased in respect of transportation costs (including fuel), taxes and fees such as landing fees, and changes in exchange rates applicable to the contract.

5. If the increase is below a certain percentage of the total cost the tour operator should absorb it. If no other percentage is stated in the contract what figure is used?

Two per cent

6. No price increase may be made within how many days of departure?

No price increase may be made within 30 days of departure.

