

Roofs and Driveways- Trading Standards Warning

16 June 2010

Lancashire Trading Standards are warning that June has brought an increase in the incidence of cold-calling driveway and roofing complaints, and that residents are asked to be on guard against the gangs of workmen targeting towns across the region, and to look out for any vulnerable or older neighbours who may be pressurised by cold callers. No one gang is responsible for the complaints- descriptions of the traders vary vastly.

Complaints about cold-calling roofers have come in from Hutton, Bamber Bridge, Burnley, Nelson, Barnoldswick, Leyland, and Skelmersdale and include aggressive practices, cracked tiles, vastly increasing prices throughout the job, newly-installed cappings hanging off, peeling paint, and fairly new roofs painted with 'sealants' for extortionate prices. Typically the traders are uncontactable when things go wrong or promise to return to fix problems but never arrive. In some cases the roofers have pestered householders until they have finally given in and reluctantly agreed to the work.

Complaints about cold-calling paving and driveways companies have been received from Morecambe, Preston, Leyland, Ormskirk and Fleetwood and include persistence until the resident agrees to the work, messy concrete or broken tarmac, blocked drains caused by the work, and in one case a resident left unable to open the shed door due to the tarmac outside it. Yet again faults remain unfixed since the workers often leave uncontactable numbers.

Residents are advised to use reputable traders with land lines, local addresses and references. Alternatively check for a trader on the County Council-backed Safe Trader website www.safetrader.org.uk.

Please refer any complaints to Lancashire Trading Standards Service, 55 Guildhall Street, Preston, Lancs PR1 3NU via Consumer Direct tel 08454 040506 and ask them to pass the information to trading standards straight away. If there is any fraud or criminal damage the matter should also be referred to the police.

Warning issued by Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Service.