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Message sent by

David Brocklebank (Nottinghamshire County Council, Trading Standards Officer, Nottinghamshire)

Following reports of door to door salesmen in the Rushcliffe area offering to coat your roof, claiming it will help it to retain heat, Trading Standards have issued the following warning:

Nottinghamshire County Council Trading Standards have received reports about businesses cold-calling and offering a roof cleaning and coating process. It is claimed the coating process provides thermal insulation. Roof tiles are designed to allow air to circulate in the roof space, so simply painting the tiles will provide no benefit to your homes' thermal efficiency. In addition, the use of high-pressure hoses to clean the roof can actually damage tiles and force water in to the roof space. You may be tempted by a very low initial quote but the price may rise when the job starts. The work may be unnecessary and the quality poor.

The salesmen have also implied that a government grant was available for the work. No government grants are available for any roof coating.

Trading Standards never recommend employing a trader based on a cold call.

Reputable companies do not usually advertise for business by calling at your home uninvited and will not visit unless you ask them to. They'll also explain your consumer rights, which rogue traders will not do.

If you have signed up for work to be done, but would now like to cancel please be aware that businesses have to give consumers a written cancellation notice giving fourteen days to cancel any contract which is agreed during a visit to a consumer's home. If you have not received a cancellation notice the trader cannot enforce the contract.

Nottinghamshire Trading Standards recommend the following:

- Keep your front and back doors locked, even when you're at home. Fix a security chain to your door, and make sure you use it every time someone calls.
- If you need work carried out contact the Buy With Confidence scheme for details of trades people who have demonstrated their commitment to fair and honest trading on www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk or 03454 04 05 06.