

June news 2011

Super sweepstakes 27/7/2011

Dear all

I wanted to advise you of the following information:

A 79 year old lady has made contact with the Police to advise us of a telephone call which she has received this morning. The caller stated that she had won a prize through "Super Sweepstakes".

The caller who had an American accent stated that this lady had won a prize but then started asking questions about how much money she had in the bank. This male also asked for bank account details.

PLEASE pass onto any elderly relatives, neighbours and friends about dealing with 'cold callers' either at the door or on the telephone. You can sign up to the telephone preference service by ringing **0845 0700707** (free of charge). This will not stop all your unwanted calls, but it should cut down on the number of unwanted calls which you receive.

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer

Warning to elderly residents 22/7/2011

Dear all

I have been contacted by a Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator who wanted to bring to my attention the following information:

An elderly lady in her 90's received a telephone call from a female who arranged an appointment over the telephone to call and see her. A representative from a company called and attempted to sell the resident an adjustable massage bed and chair costing thousands of pounds. The sales representative was in this ladies home for 4 hours!

Fortunately, this lady did not part with any money.

PLEASE can I ask that you pass onto your residents, family and friends to be extremely wary about dealing with 'cold callers' of any kind. Once these people have one foot in the door, they **WILL** give the hard sell and they **WILL** want to sell you something, which can usually turn out to be very expensive.

Unfortunately, it is usually our more elderly and vulnerable residents who are at risk.

Due to the Data Protection Act I am unable to disclose the name of the company.

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer

Trading standards information 21/7/2011

Dear all

Please see attached the latest information from Lancashire Trading Standards:

Unfortunately, due to the current economic climate, we are seeing an increase in the number of unwanted 'doorstep callers'. Only yesterday I visited an elderly gentleman in the Leyland Area who had been visited by 3 males offering to put soil down in his garden which he was advised would stop the weeds from coming through. The initial cost of the soil was £85, but they eventually settled on a price of £45 which the gentleman paid.

The amount of soil which has been put on the borders is very minimal (2 small bags at the most) and the weeds have already started to grow through the soil!

These types of people **WILL** target our more elderly and vulnerable residents. Please could I ask that if you have any elderly relatives, friends or neighbours that you speak to them and advise them against dealing with 'cold callers' of any kind.

If anyone would like any booklets/leaflets about doorstep crime, scams or any information, please do not hesitate to make contact with me.

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer

Information from Lancashire Trading Standards Service 20/7/2011

Please see below information released by Lancashire Trading Standards Service:
Office of Fair Trading Doorstep Selling Campaign 2011

The campaign begins this week and is aimed at awareness and empowering people, particularly the over 70's and their friends and family, carers and medical professionals in relation to doorstep selling. Areas specifically highlighted are maintenance and property repairs, garden repairs given the increase of these incidents in the summer months. The campaign will also raise awareness of buying mobility aids, encouraging people to shop around before making a decision.

For more information see <http://www.oft.gov.uk/news-and-updates/press/2011/83-11>

Local issues:

Tarmacers

Reports of doorstep callers offering to tarmac drives have been received in the past month from Ormskirk, Chorley, Thornton Cleveleys and Colne areas of Lancashire, including one instance where work was carried out without the permission of the householder. If you need any house maintenance work carrying out, use the Safe Trader Scheme to find a trader, <https://www.traderregister.org.uk/index.php>

Roof Coating

Reports from Lytham St Annes and Accrington have been received in relation to doorstep sellers offering to coat your roof, making it waterproof and retain heat. The sale was linked in with reducing fuel bills and the availability of a government grant for the work was implied. No government grants are available for any roof paint/coating, in general, roof coatings are purely cosmetic, be very wary of claims made.

As always, Trading Standards advice is never to do business on the doorstep.

Refer any complaints to Lancashire Trading Standards Service, Room D21, County Hall, Preston, Lancs PR1 3NU via Consumer Direct tel 08454 040506

Cold telephone calls 18/7/2011

Dear all

One of my Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinators has made contact to advise me that she received a telephone call on Thursday from someone purporting to be from the Ministry Of Justice. The caller advised my Co-Ordinator that if she went to the Spar shop in Leyland and purchased a coupon for £200 then someone the following day would call round to see her with a cheque for £2800!

The telephone number which the call was made from was 0161 408 6213 – when you ring this number, it states the person you wish to speak with is not available.

PLEASE be wary about dealing with anyone who either 'cold calls' at your door or contacts you by telephone. We are seeing an increase in the number of 'doorstep callers' and also unsolicited telephone calls and the best advice I can give is **NOT** to deal with them.

If you get someone at your door, advise them you do not deal with 'doorstep callers' and if you receive an unsolicited telephone call, do not entertain these, put the telephone down.

If you have not signed up to the telephone preference service, you can do this free of charge by ringing **0845 0700 707**. This will not stop all your unwanted telephone calls, but it should filter out a large number.

If anyone requires any further information, help or advice, please do not hesitate to make contact with me.

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer

Door to door callers 7/7/2011

Dear all

This morning I have received a telephone call from a Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator in the Leyland Area advising there are several canvassers going door to door offering free raffle tickets to residents.

Just be wary, the canvassers will offer you a raffle ticket (which they ask you to put your name and telephone number on), which will go into a free prize draw for a car. A few days later you will probably receive a telephone call to say that you have been selected to receive a **FREE** carpet cleaning demonstration.

A representative will call at your home and carry out a demonstration for you, but **BEWARE**, they **WILL** want to sell you a very expensive vacuum cleaner.

I did send out a warning last year regarding this company where they actually drove an 83 yr old lady to the bank to withdraw £1000 to purchase a vacuum cleaner (which was far too heavy for her to use and was totally inappropriate). Fortunately, I was successful in getting this lady a refund at the time due to the sales techniques which were used.

If you have any elderly friends, relatives or neighbours, **PLEASE** advise them to be wary about dealing with 'cold callers'. It has been known for representatives to be in someone's home for several hours, refusing to leave until they have secured a sale.

If anyone has any problems with doorstep callers, please contact the Police on 0845 1 25 35 45 or alternatively if you have any complaints, contact Lancashire Trading Standards on 08454 040506

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer
Tel: 01772-625593

Recent operation in South Ribble 6/7/2011

I just wanted to advise you of the following vehicle operation which took place in Bamber Bridge on Wednesday 29th June. This operation included some of our partner agencies i.e. VOSA, Trading Standards and South Ribble Borough Council.

A total of 36 vehicles were checked and fully examined. Targets consisted of scrap metal dealers, commercial vehicles, taxis and any other vehicles which did not comply with agency legislation.

The following results were achieved:

- 164 breath samples were taken
- 20 fixed penalty notices were issued
- 9 prohibition notices were issued

The above fixed penalty notices and prohibition notices were issued for a variety of offences.

This operation sent out a clear message to the road users in South Ribble that vehicles will be checked out, and where necessary appropriate action taken.

Beverley Warburton
Crime Prevention Officer
Tel: 01772-625593

Crime busting hotline is the best in the country 1/7/2011

Crimestoppers in Lancashire catch more criminals than anywhere else in the country, figures show.

The anonymous crime reporting hotline has been praised after figures showed almost one in four calls lead to an arrest, compared to an average of one in ten elsewhere in the country.

Calls to the hotline rose from 2,775 to 2,805 leading to the arrest of 657 individuals - 50 more than the previous year.

Lancashire was the only area to produce a conversion rate of more than 20%.

The chairman of the charity, Gail Porter, said: "For the past few years now the people of Lancashire have shown that they really do understand and appreciate the work that Crimestoppers does in helping to solve crimes in our county. Many criminals would never have been caught without Crimestoppers. Anonymity for those providing information to the police has been the key to our success and I am immensely proud of what Crimestoppers has achieved with the support of the people of Lancashire and I would urge anyone with information that they think may be of assistance to the police to make that call."

Crimestoppers, which was set up in 1988, is on 0800 555 111.

Trading standards warning regarding an alarm company

Please view the pdf file regarding a company 'selling' house alarms for £1, using hard selling tactics. Click [here](#) to view the pdf file.