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Sent: 17 June 2009 14:29
To: BD - PCSO; SW-NSO; Thurrock - PCSOs
Cc: Teverett@thurrock.gov.uk
Subject: NhW - Bens Gutters [NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Classification: NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Please pass this information on to friends and neighbours.

Following recent concern about leaflets being delivered to homes, in particular one for Ben's Gutters, I have spoken with Thurrock Trading standards about this issue to get the correct advice to pass on to you all.

For those few of you who haven't received the Ben's Gutters compliment slip, it looks handwritten in felt pen and says he is cleaning the gutters of a close neighbour to you and would you like yours done at the same visit?, It gives a website address and a mobile number and is signed Ben. Thurrock Trading standards say the advert is breaching the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading 2008 regulations because it is misleading in its contents and appearance and may make a person pay money to the company. Enquiries with Company House have also shown that Ben's Gutters is not registered as a limited company as its website states it is. Thurrock Trading standards have brought this issue to the attention of the Sussex Trading standards where the company originates from and they will make contact with Ben's Gutters to highlight the concerns and have them change their advertising.

As far as I am aware, there have been no reports of criminal activity in connection with any local resident using this company; it's just their advertising strategy that is misleading.

I would urge everyone to avoid using companies that leaflet drop. If you want any work done, use personal recommendations or look for companies in the yellow pages or from the internet and always get 3 quotes before you settle on a company.

If you have any concerns or problems when dealing with any trading standard matter from dealing with people at the front door to buying defective goods from a shop, your first call should be to Consumer Direct, as below.



They work in a similar way to NHS Direct in that they can give advice over the phone on your issue, they will record your complaint and pass it on to the relevant Trading Standard department and if it is an urgent issue (e.g. cold callers still in your road as you are talking to Consumer Direct), they will alert the local Trading standards immediately, who if on duty will attend the incident and speak with the cold caller while they are still in place.

If anyone receives any more of the Ben's Gutters compliment slips in the same format as before, after 1st July, please contact Consumer Direct as the company will have been advised to change their advertising and should have done so by this time.

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