

Doorstep Selling Loophole Closed

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New legislation comes into force today to close a loophole commonly exploited by rogue traders.

The updated 'Doorstep Selling' regulations (<http://whatconsumer.co.uk/doorstep-selling/>) give consumers a cooling off period for any deals struck in their home or place of work. Previously, cooling off rights could only be invoked if the contract or arrangement had been made as a result of an unsolicited visit. Firms were routinely able to get round this by claiming that the visit was arranged at the request of the customer. In addition, the customer must now be presented with clear and prominent written notification of their right to cancel. Failure to do so will render the contract legally unenforceable, even if a deposit has been paid.

Catriona Bright of What Consumer welcomed the new laws, saying "This is good news for consumers, particularly the elderly, who are so often the victims of intimidation from unscrupulous traders who find a way into their homes. Many people are not aware of their right to cancel, and firms will often rush to start the work or send the goods before the end of the cooling off period, thus invalidating it."

Bright continued, "The new regulations are tough on firms who fail to advise consumers of their rights, while at the same time giving traders certain rights should consumers cancel after the work has started or the goods delivered. This balanced approach ensures fairness for both parties and I'm confident it will work well."

About What Consumer

What Consumer is a leading UK consumer advice website and aims to empower and protect consumers against unscrupulous suppliers. The site was established to convince the public at large that knowing your basic statutory rights (<http://whatconsumer.co.uk/what-are-my-statutory-rights/>) isn't 'rocket science' and can come in extremely handy. It also provides interactive features providing consumers with the opportunity to support each other as well as engaging with consumer experts.

Notes to Editors

The new legislation is called the Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work etc. Regulations 2008 (http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2008/uksi_20081816_en_1)

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