

March 2019

Consumer Alerts

Loose tiles scam

Beware bogus builders in the Accrington area. In one instance the builders' cold called and offered to fix a loose roof tile. They then fraudulently claimed thousands of pounds of repair work needed doing to the roof, the householders withdrew the money from the bank and handed it to the traders who took the money and did not return. Two red vans with writing on the side were reported in the vicinity at the time.

Callers offering to buy antiques, watches, military items etc

Reports are being received from the Ormskirk area, households targeted with a leaflet asking for valuable items, with a follow up visit the next day. Be cautious as to who you let into your house. Past reports of similar sellers have raised issues of pushy selling and low valuations. If you are interested in selling items of value, always shop around, speak to local jewellers and antique dealers.

Problem with your drains?

A spate of calls have been received about drain services. Good advice is to take a little bit of time to do your research before contracting with a trader. Even if the work is urgent, shop around, make sure the price you are quoted is reasonable.

You are responsible for the pipes, gutters and drains in and around your home, including the drains from your property up to your boundary, unless it is a shared drain where several neighboring properties' drains meet together before they join the public sewer. If in doubt, check with United Utilities on 0345 6723723.

Make sure you check what is covered by any insurance policies you have.

Pushy Jet washing services

Persistent cold callers offering to jet wash/ steam clean driveways have been reported in the Preston area. One resident said no, but the trader revisited the next day and after pushy selling, the vulnerable householder agreed.

Beware Wine Investment Schemes

A recent query received by the Service, where a Lancashire resident lost large amounts of money, has highlighted that wine investment schemes, whilst not illegal, are not regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and hence complaints are not covered by the Financial Services Ombudsman. Such schemes are very much a matter of buyer beware.

Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers. The Safetrader scheme can help you find a trader in

**your area, contact 0303 333 1111 or go to
www.safetrader.org.uk**

**Contact the Trading Standards Service
via the Citizens Advice Consumer
Helpline on 03454 04 05 06**