

News Release



a new brand; a new HVCA

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EARLY REPORTS OF GREEN DEAL COWBOYS ATTEMPTING TO RIP OFF HOMEOWNERS

The Green Deal has barely got going and already there are reports of rogue traders attempting to use the cover of this Government initiative to defraud householders. B&ES, who operate the Heating Helpline, say the Government needs to do more to publicise the fact that only authorised installers will be able to identify themselves as 'Green Deal Installers' and use the Green Deal Quality Mark.

16 May 2013 – The Green Deal has barely got going and already there are reports of rogue traders attempting to use the cover of this Government initiative to defraud householders. Caerphilly Trading Standards have recently received 17 complaints of people knocking on doors claiming that homeowners were entitled to around £10,000 of funding for home improvements and that the improvements would be free. The householders were then asked for an “administration fee” to

undertake various tasks on behalf of the householder. But Tim Keohane, senior trading standards officer in Caerphilly, said that none of the people under investigation were registered under the scheme.

Blane Judd, Chief Executive of B&ES, the Building & Engineering Services Association who operate Heating Helpline, the free consumer advice service, comments: "We did anticipate this happening. It doesn't take long for fraudsters – the thousands of bogus gas installers, rogue traders and cowboy builders operating in the UK – to latch on to any Government-backed initiative on home improvements and try to defraud unsuspecting homeowners. We saw this most recently with hundreds of rogue solar heating installers operating in the UK; unscrupulous companies that jumped on the renewable energies bandwagon and ripped off homeowners, resulting in dozens of court cases.

"Homeowners need to be aware that Green Deal firms must go through a registration and accreditation process before they can use the Green Deal Accreditation logo and offer to do Green Deal work. However we feel that the Government has not done enough to make all consumers, and especially homeowners, aware of this and exactly how they can legitimately take advantage of the Green Deal. Until then, expect to hear many more examples of rip-off tactics by Green Deal Cowboys."

The Green Deal came into force from January 2013. Homeowners and tenants will be able to make energy saving improvements such as installing solar panels and new boilers through the Green Deal. From 1st October 2012 accredited advisers including energy companies, retailers and leading contractors / installers have been able to survey homes and assess the most effective improvements for that property. The cost of the loan can be spread over periods up to 25 years and collected via energy bills.

Only authorised installers will be able to identify themselves as 'Green Deal Installers' and use the Green Deal Quality Mark. Authorised installers will be certified under the relevant certification scheme for their

trade. It is envisaged that the standard of installation will be appropriately guaranteed.

The Heating Helpline provides consumers with free, impartial advice on home heating and energy saving. For more information visit the website at: www.heatinghelpline.org.uk or call 0800 810 8303.

Ends

Issued on behalf of B&ES (the Building & Engineering Services Association) by Next Step Marketing Ltd

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Notes to editors

Since its formation in 1904, B&ES, the Building & Engineering Services Association (formerly the HVCA) has represented the interests of companies engaged in a wide range of building and engineering services including domestic heating and renewable technologies.

B&ES members are subject to regular, third-party inspection and assessment of their technical competence and commercial capability, carried out by an independent certification body at least every three years.

B&ES members who undertake gas installations are registered with Gas Safe – the gas safety watchdog body – and are also members of TrustMark, the Government-endorsed scheme designed to direct customers towards reliable tradespeople.

B&ES operates the *Heating Helpline* (www.heatinghelpline.org.uk) to provide consumers with free, impartial advice on every aspect of home heating, including gas safety.

Picture Captions:

Left: "Homeowners being sold the Green Deal should ask for the firm's registration and accreditation details before they commit to anything".

Left: Blane Judd, Chief Executive of B&ES