

Media Release

22 NOVEMBER 2012

WARNING ISSUED OVER DOOR-TO-DOOR TREE MAINTENANCE OFFERS

The Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mr Paul White, has today issued a warning to the public about door-to-door traders offering to assess tree safety or cut down trees in your garden.

“Consumer and Business Services received a complaint from a caller whose elderly parents living in the Port Adelaide area were door-knocked by two men claiming to be from a registered tree services company.

“The couple’s son reported that the traders offered to assess the safety of trees in the garden, and then offered to cut down the trees at a cost of \$800.

“The traders ignored the Do Not Knock sign at the door, and despite being told their services were not required returned to the couple’s home.

“The traders then led the couple to believe that the son had engaged them to do the work.

“The son is furious about the way that the traders have harassed his parents and given them false information.

“By ignoring that Do Not Knock sign, these traders flouted the law and could face hefty fines.

“Under the Australian Consumer Law, if you ask a door-to-door trader to leave they must do so immediately and they can’t return for 30 days.

“Anyone prosecuted for ignoring this provision could face a maximum penalty of \$50,000 for corporations and \$10,000 for individuals.” said Mr White.

The traders did not provide any contract forms, or discuss a cooling-off period.

Mr White said, “People should be very wary of door-to-door traders requesting large amounts of money up front, and offering same-day services in return for cash.

“This particular business appears to be using a legitimate, registered name, but the way these traders are operating appears to be dishonest and misleading, and potentially breaking the law.

“Door-to-door traders must show you their identification. Consumers who buy goods or services via door-to-door sales need to know they are entitled to a 10-day cooling off period, and if the deal is worth \$100 or more the trader must explain these cooling off rights before a contract is signed.”

...2/



Media Release

Consumers who encounter difficulties with door-to-door traders should call Consumer and Business Services on 131 882.

Consumer and Business Services is currently investigating this issue, and would appreciate any information from the public that might assist.

If you can help please call CBS on 131 882 and select menu option 5.