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Residents are being warned to be on their guard to doorstep sellers offering loft insulation, often claiming it will add substantial value to their home and save them money.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards have received numerous complaints from residents about these sellers. The prices quoted are excessively high, often in excess of £3,000 and up to £7,000.

Rob Edmunds, trading standards officer, said: "Residents are advised to say 'no' to all doorstep cold callers - if no sales are made in the area they are less likely to return. If you do require work to your property always get a minimum of three written quotations from established traders who have been recommended by others, or by using the Safe Local Trades website.

"We are warning residents to be on their guard. Cold callers have in the past attempted to trick their way into people's homes with the intention of stealing money or property. These people often work in teams of two or more and they usually prey on people who are elderly or vulnerable. Bogus callers can be anyone and use many different guises to gain entry to your home, often pretending to be council officials, workmen from the gas or water board, or even the police."

Further advice from the Trading Standards team includes:

- > Use your door-chain or door-bar when answering the door and install a door viewer and an outside light.
- > Ask to see the caller's identity card and check it thoroughly. If you feel unsure, ask the caller to wait on the doorstep while you phone the company to check.
- > Lock the door while you phone and don't open the door until you are totally convinced. Anyone who is genuine will not mind you doing this.
- > Ask them to return at an agreed day and time when you have someone with you. Don't let callers put pressure on you to let them in.
- > If in doubt - keep them out.

If you have any information to pass to the Trading Standards team about doorstep sellers, please contact 03454 040506 or tradingstandards@peterborough.gov.uk.