

# Consumer Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 27, 2008



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## County of Summit Office of Consumer Affairs Warns Homeowners to Beware of Home Repair "Travelers"

Summer has finally arrived and along with it the traveling door-to-door home repair con artists! Before answering the door, homeowners need to be aware of these "travelers" and their practices. Travelers are criminals who move around the country, staying in one place just long enough to swindle homeowners out of their money through shoddy work and the use of poor quality materials.

These home repair travelers are not located in the area and it is much more difficult, sometimes impossible, to find them when you need to file a complaint. The most common home repair and service scams are asphalt laying, driveway or roof sealing, painting and tree trimming. Often the home repair travelers claim to have leftover material from a completed job and are offering a bargain price.

Already, there has been a report to a local police department of travelers targeting homeowners in Summit County. As recently as two weeks ago, the Copley Police Department received a complaint against a door-to-door solicitor from out-of-state offering asphalt repair using inferior products and poor workmanship.

"Homeowners should resist hiring on impulse when a door-to-door home repair solicitor shows up offering to do work at an unreasonably low rate," said Cynthia Sich, Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs. "Many times the consumers end up with shoddy work and the home repair solicitor is no where to be found."

### **Tips on Avoiding Home Repair "Traveler" Scams**

1. Ask to see soliciting permits.
2. Obtain several bids or estimates for work prior hiring a home repair contractor.
3. Contact the Better Business Bureau, Ohio Attorney General's Office or County of Summit Office of Consumer Affairs before signing the contract.
4. Get a written contract that includes the company name, address, phone number, cost of labor and materials, and all the services to be provided.
5. If you are solicited at home, *REMEMBER the Home Solicitation Act* gives you a 3-day right to cancel the sale and the cancellation notice must be in writing.