



Trading Standards BUSINESS MATTERS

June - September 2009

Up-to-date news for Businesses

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How to Contact Us

Telephone:
(0116) 305 8000

Email:
tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk

www.leics.gov.uk/tradingstandards

www.askcedric.org.uk

Business Advice

Confidential, free advice on all trading standards matters including help for you to solve your consumer complaints. We can also help you to access available Rural Business Grants

Persistent Law Breakers Selling Tobacco To Under 18s Beware



From 1st April 2009 new sanctions can be imposed if shops repeatedly sell tobacco products to under 18s, this is in addition to the penalties that already exist i.e. a fine of up to £2,500.

The new sanctions will mean the shop could be prohibited from selling tobacco products for a period of up to 12 months, or a specific person within a business may be prohibited from selling tobacco or from having any management role in the business for a period of up to 12 months.

If a business breaches the above sanctions, they could face a fine of up to £20,000.

Retailers are reminded to always ask for proof of age if a person looks 21 or under to avoid illegal sales.

If you are aware of any shop in your area that is selling cigarettes to young persons under 18 years of age, please contact the Trading Standards Service via Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

Avoid the 'scammers'

Scams on businesses include:-

- "free" listings in business directories where the victim unknowingly signs up to pay for repeated entries;
- falsely stating that adverts will be published in "charitable" publications
- falsely claiming that a business has agreed to sponsor books for a local school
- tricking businesses into ordering unwanted and overpriced office supplies
- e-mails, phone calls etc saying that a business is entitled to an unexpected refund or other payment and asking for bank details.

To avoid these scams:-

- designate authorised employees who can approve the purchase of goods and services;
- never agree to anything in a rush. You can enter into a legally binding contract over the phone;
- carry out research on the supplier who has cold called you and on the goods or services being offered before you purchase;
- always remember to ask for a phone number, contact name and address;

and finally ...

- never give bank or card details to anyone unless you know that they are genuine.

If you come across any business scams, please report them to us on our Business Advice line 0116 305 8000 or at tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk .



FREE Alcohol/Tobacco underage sales workshops

Leicestershire Trading Standards is offering free underage sales workshops to alcohol and tobacco retailers.

The workshops are aimed at business owners, Designated Premises Supervisors, and people supervise staff who sell age restricted products. The subjects covered will include:-

- the “Challenge 21” scheme
- staff training records and refusals records
- new legislation affecting tobacco sellers and
- counterfeit products.

The aim is to provide businesses with the skills and knowledge needed to help prevent illegal sales.

All of those attending a recent workshop took away ideas which they felt could improve the running of their businesses. Comments included “I think this is an excellent idea and would work well to educate shop keepers”, “Most enjoyable and relaxed presentations” and “The new legislation regarding tobacco was very interesting”.

A number of workshops are proposed over the next 12 months held at different locations around the County. The workshops are an ideal opportunity to take advantage of free ‘tailor made’ training, which is practical and understandable.

For more information or to secure places on a workshop, please telephone 0116 305 8159 or email tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk.



Day in the life of a Trading Standards Business Advisor



My name is Samantha Hoad and I work as a Trading Standards Business Advisor. My core objective is to provide free, friendly, expert advice to businesses to make it easier for them to understand and comply with trading laws.

A typical day involves the following:

A request has come in from a business owner, who is importing and selling toys and is asking about the safety legislation that applies and what his responsibilities are. I will visit the owner to establish a working relationship.

There is a letter from a business that needs advice on food labelling. This goes to a specialist food officer in Trading Standards for detailed advice.

I receive a call from an estate agent who has asked me to check documents and procedures. I have asked the manager to email me the documents for consideration.

I have an appointment at 11am with an internet trader at his home. She needs help in complying with distance selling. I have asked another adviser to cover the telephone lines whilst I am away.

During a gap in calls I'm working on a letter to a large company about tightening up their systems regarding cosmetic products safety legislation. This company is based in Leicestershire but trades nationally. We take on the responsibility for advising the

business on trading standards law and coordinate queries from other trading standards authorities.

I receive a call from a business owner who wants to know more about recent changes in trading standards legislation. I send her some written guidance and general leaflets to get her started.

Before finishing I write a letter to a new small business that called yesterday needing advice about children's jewellery. Along with this letter I have sent out our Trading Standards advice pack with an array of practical information for new businesses.

As you can see, the variety, both in terms of the areas of law that I deal with and the breadth of businesses that I advise, makes the job interesting and challenging.

If you need free, expert advice on Trading Standards matters give our Business Advice Line a call on 0116 305 8000.

