

Don't fall victim to 'man with a van' rubbish removal con

Rogue rubbish removers who advertise their services at knock-down prices via social media could land householders and business owners in hot water, it has been warned.

South Derbyshire District Council has experienced a rise in the number of cases where 'a man with a van' offers to remove unwanted items from homes for payment, only to then fly-tip the waste in the area.

When the waste is traced back to the original owner, that individual is required to give a recorded interview under caution to the Council's Safer Neighbourhood Wardens and the matter could result in court action.

The Council is urging people to be vigilant and to get in touch immediately with any information which might help bring unscrupulous traders to justice.

Cllr Peter Watson, Chairman of the authority's Environmental and Development Services Committee, said: "Regretfully, no matter how innocent the circumstances, those who pay for the removal of waste are ultimately responsible for its safe and legal disposal, meaning they could end up with a criminal record and a fine of thousands of pounds if it's then fly-tipped and traced back to them.

"People are often conned by rogue collectors who post flyers through the letterbox, cold call at their door or, increasingly, take to social media to promote their services.

"All tradespeople – from builders and plumbers to carpet layers and tree surgeons – must have a waste carriers permit to take away rubbish from the work they've done, so it's always wise to ask to see one.

"Our message is clear – if you're not sure, don't accept an offer to pay for the removal of your waste."

If a removal operator advertises their services or calls at the door, people are urged to:

- Ask them to provide a full address, telephone number and vehicle registration details;
- Ask to see their waste carriers licence, issued by the Environment Agency; and
- Contact the Environment Agency directly on 0870 8506 506 and ask for a free instant Waste Carrier Validation Check. Alternatively, they can check the person has a waste carriers licence online at www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Anyone with information about those suspected to be involved in the illegal depositing of waste can call the authority's Safer Neighbourhood Wardens, in the strictest confidence, on 01283 595968 or email them on neighbourhood.wardens@south-derbys.gov.uk

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