

Is That Knock On Your Door Cause For Alarm?

Protect Yourself From Fraud

If you are home during the day, you are more likely to meet door-to-door salespersons. While some door-to-door salespersons are honest, the chances are excellent that whoever answers the door is about to be ripped off. Door-to-door con artists are charming and friendly. Their smiles are inviting. They are successful because they seem so honest.

Door-to-door con artists often:

- Greet you by name to seem friendly. (They may have seen your name on your mail or in a city directory.)
- Use tricks to get into your home. They might imply they are from your alarm company and need to test or upgrade your system. Don't let a creative story relax your caution on whom you let in your home.
- Offer a free upgrade or free system- Check the fine print you will pay for the system somehow.
- Pressure you to make a decision. They may say the offer is only good that day.

You Have a Right to Cancel

If you change your mind within three business days, you can get out of a door to door sales contract and receive a full refund. This is called the cooling-off period. Along with your contract or receipt, you should be given two copies of a cancellation form that you need to sign, date and mail. You don't have to have any reason for canceling. If you didn't get a cancellation form, write a letter. Because the seller broke the law by not giving you a cancellation form, you have extra time to cancel. You still must cancel in writing. The sooner you do this, the better.



Local License Often Required

A salesperson who visits your home may be required to have a peddlers, sales or solicitor's license or permit. Check with the consumer protection office in your locality for more information.



Help prevent these problems for yourself and others by reporting unlicensed companies and individuals.

Maryland Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division
Consumer hotline: (410) 528-8662 or 1 (888) 743-0023 toll-free

Why Take A Chance! Use a Licensed Maryland Professional!

Individuals may be unlicensed because they may not:

- meet financial requirements
- be able to pass a background check
- meet experience requirements
- meet insurance requirements

Produced by the Maryland Chapter of the False Alarm Reduction Association (www.faraonline.org) and the Maryland Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (www.mdbfaa.org)

Investigate Both the Seller and the Offer



- Take your time making a decision.
- Get several estimates & compare.
- Check the Better Business Bureau or consumer affairs office about the company.
- Read the information carefully to be sure you know what the quoted price includes.
- If the salesperson claims to be from your alarm company ask for their license or call the company to verify.

Maryland Consumers Have Registered Many Complaints, Including:

- Customer unwittingly agreed in contract to pay for fines charged to the unlicensed company and/or lengthy terms.
- Companies claim to represent the customer's existing alarm company, and falsely tell the customer that they need an upgrade. After the customer signs, they become obligated to two companies for the same services.
- Companies claim to offer a "free" system when in reality customers are committing to an extended contract that has a built in fee for the equipment.
- Accounts are sold to another company preventing the customer from getting proper service.

Protect Yourself

The best safeguard against faulty and hazardous work is to make sure the company you hire has a **valid license** from the State Police. Do **NOT** accept just a company ID!



Maryland State Pocket Card