

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Buyer Beware of Door-to-Door Heating and Cooling Equipment Sales

Saskatchewan plumbing and heating specialists are encouraging homeowners to do their homework and take steps to protect themselves before investing in new heating and cooling equipment.

In light of recent complaints, the Mechanical Contractors Association of Saskatchewan (MCAS), Natural Gas Appliance and Equipment Association (NGAEDA), and SaskEnergy Network Members are reminding Saskatchewan residents to properly research door-to-door salespeople and out-of-province companies offering equipment sales.

Several local businesses and organizations have received reports of high-pressure sales tactics, as well as false, incorrect, or misleading information about natural gas appliance sales. These claims include salespeople insinuating they are associated with SaskEnergy, which they are not; and being intentionally vague about offers and rebates, which has resulted in customers assuming there is a government or SaskEnergy rebate, which there currently is not.

“Upgrading to high-efficiency heating equipment can go a long way to saving money and increasing comfort, however it really is a buyer beware market when making this type of purchase,” said Carolyn Bagnell, Executive Director for MCAS. “If a deal sounds too good to be true – it usually is. Don’t be afraid to ask a lot of questions, thoroughly review financing contracts and fine print before you sign, research the company, and shop around by gathering quotes from other local contractors.”

A contractor should be able to provide a valid business license for Saskatchewan and the local municipality, proof of liability insurance, and all necessary permits.

Scott Grieve, President of NGAEDA, encourages customers to learn as much as they can about a contractor’s qualifications and previous work, and check the company’s reviews with consumer agencies such as the Better Business Bureau of Saskatchewan. Contractors should have a solid work history and several references available.

“We hear of cases where customers have quickly signed agreements through door-to-door sales, either because they felt pressured into it, or the seller falsely claimed to be affiliated with local associations, businesses, or Crown corporations. These contracts can lead to customers paying thousands of dollars more than expected,” Grieve said. “In many cases the equipment is also low-quality or poorly installed, and when things go wrong the company has no local presence to repair or replace the appliance.”

If the contract has already been signed, and the customer feels they have been misled on the service, equipment or cost, they have the ability to halt the transaction within 10 days of signing the contract. These customers can also contact the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority (FCAA) of the Government of Saskatchewan at 306-787-5645 or 1-877-880-5550.

SaskEnergy Network Members do not conduct door-to-door sales activities. If the salesperson for the company claims to be associated with another business or government agency, contact the organization directly to verify a relationship does exist. SaskEnergy does not send service technicians door-to-door to perform service inspections or maintenance on appliances. If a customer wants an inspection they can request a Home Heating Tune-Up from a SaskEnergy Network Member. More information on Network Members and rebates/programs offered by SaskEnergy can be found at www.saskenergy.com.

For a list of recommended questions to ask your heating contractor, visit www.mca-sask.com.

-30-

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