

News Release

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Hon Gail Gago

Minister for State/Local Government
Relations
Minister for the Status of Women
Minister for Consumer Affairs
Minister for Government Enterprises
Minister for the City of Adelaide

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DON'T LET THESE SHONKS WORK ON YOUR DRIVEWAY

Dodgy bitumen layers are again door-knocking households across Adelaide offering their services, such as laying driveways, supposedly for a bargain price.

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gail Gago, is warning consumers to avoid at all costs the itinerant bitumen layers who are claiming to represent the Highways Department.

“These dodgy bitumen layers have a long history of over-charging consumers for work that is substandard, and then quickly disappearing.”

“The bitumen is usually laid so thinly and in a slap-dash manner that it soon cracks and looks unsightly.”

Consumers have reported the itinerant bitumen layers operating in the Gawler region and also the southern beach-side suburbs. One consumer became so concerned after feeling pressured into paying \$5,700 for bitumen-laying work that he contacted the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA). He subsequently cancelled the cheque.

“Investigation officers from OCBA are tracking the movements of these bitumen layers and hoping to intercept their activities,” Ms Gago said.

“Just a few months ago, several bitumen layers were intercepted and one even jailed for using fake identification to swindle consumers. OCBA worked closely with SAPOL and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship towards this successful outcome.

“Consumers should not deal with door-knocking bitumen layers, otherwise they’ll end up with a poorly laid driveway that needs significant repair work or even complete demolition.”

Consumers who have information about the activities of itinerant bitumen layers are urged to contact OCBA on 8204 9777, or for country callers 131 882 (local call cost).

Itinerant bitumen layers usually operate in breach of the door-to-door sales provisions set out in the *Fair Trading Act 1987*. The provisions give consumers a 10-day cooling off period during which they can consider the purchase, and the trader must not provide any goods or services or accept any payment until the cooling off period expires. If a trader breaches these provisions then consumers are entitled to have their money refunded and the contract nullified.