



# Woburn Police Department

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## Crime Prevention Tip

### Avoid Being the Victim of a Scam - May 2014

A man knocks on your door and says he has extra asphalt and is willing to pave your driveway at a discounted price. His high pressure approach confuses and intimidates. You are not getting a deal, you are being scammed.

If you agree, here is what likely happens. Men and equipment suddenly appear and begin "working" on your driveway. At some point, the conman claims a mistake was made and you owe thousands more than the original price. He threatens that if you refuse to pay, the "work" will cease. You may be escorted to the bank, to withdraw money. When you realize the scam you try to cancel the check only to learn it was cashed within minutes of it being written.

Paving scams like this occur regularly in Massachusetts and increase during spring and summer. The perpetrators target senior citizens and are well known to police across the country. Criminal charges vary by state but are commonly filed.

Avoid victimization and consider the following suggestions:

Beware of unsolicited offers to do paving work. Do not let the solicitors inside your home. Calmly but firmly tell the solicitors you are not interested and tell them to leave your property. If they refuse your instructions call the police.

Educate yourself and your family. Search the internet for "paving scams."

Ask to see proof of the solicitors' insurance. Conmen rarely have worker's compensation insurance and if one of them is injured at your home, the claim could be made against your homeowner's insurance.

Call the police if they begin "working" without your consent for service.

Be a good neighbor. Paving scams target senior citizens.

Call the police if you have questions, or if unfamiliar people or companies appear at your door or in your neighborhood.

This article is intended as a public service announcement. It is a warning that joins numerous similar warnings that have appeared in newspapers, on television and been sent out by the AARP. Your vigilance will help police in their effort to keep Massachusetts safe and secure. When faced with one of these scammers remember, there is no such thing as extra asphalt.

There are similar scams involving offers to perform tree work and chimney work. Usually the scam starts with "We were working down the street and saw that you need to have your tree (or chimney) work on."