



## Watch Out for Storm Cowboys

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Householders are being advised by Essex County Council Trading Standards against using cowboy builders or rogue traders if their houses or fences have been damaged by the storms and high winds.

Legitimate builders, plumbers, carpenters and other craftsmen will be working at full stretch and Trading Standards is concerned that dishonest traders will take advantage of the situation to rip off vulnerable residents.

Traders who knock on your door or leaflet you may provide you with a false address or a pay as you go mobile number that cannot be traced.

Trading Standards advise people to speak to their insurance companies before engaging anyone to carry out repair work and to approach businesses approved by the insurers.

In the case of flood damage, electricity and gas companies may be able to make free inspections and advise on safety work.

If your house or property has been damaged by the recent storm the last thing you need is a rogue trader adding to the problem. We would recommend using one of our Buy with Confidence traders, who have been audited and approved by Trading Standards”.

You can find a Buy with Confidence trader or obtain advice and guidance on any consumer issue by calling the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 040506, who handle calls for Trading Standards or look on [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)

We would also urge residents to ensure that rogue or doorstep traders do not rip off friends and neighbours family.