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Transient Vendors: Get the Facts Before You Buy

PIERRE, S.D. – Transient vendor season is underway in South Dakota, a time when out-of-state vendors roll into the state to sell their products and services. While many of the vendors are legitimate, the South Dakota Department of Revenue advises people to take common-sense steps to ensure vendors are reputable before doing business with them.

If you're considering hiring a person to provide repair or construction services, the department advises you to:

- Ask for a price quote, in advance, in writing.
- Question the contractor about a permanent address and telephone number, and don't assume that if the information they provide is local, they're a local business. Transient vendors often have business cards printed with local mailing services or motel addresses and telephone numbers.
- Ask for a list of local references and check them before making a decision.
- Ask if the contractor has worker's compensation and general liability insurance. If vendors are not properly insured, homeowners may be liable for accidents that occur on their property.
- Be careful about paying for work in advance; before making final payments, make sure transient vendors have paid their local suppliers or you may be held liable for unpaid materials.
- Make sure you're completely satisfied with the work before paying the bill, and don't pay more for the job than originally quoted unless you've given written approval for the additional work or cost.

Out-of-state vendors often travel to South Dakota to sell items like fruit, seafood, meat packages, paintings, magazine subscriptions, rugs, T-shirts, sunglasses, household cleaners, furniture, stuffed animals, and asphaltting and roofing services. Asking the right questions when approached by those vendors can help you avoid making a purchase you may regret:

- Question the salesperson about the product, warranties, guarantees, etc.
- Get something in writing with the company's name, address and phone number.
- Ask to see their current South Dakota tax license. State law requires everyone selling products or services to have a current South Dakota sales or contractors' excise tax license. To verify if the license is valid, call the Department's toll-free helpline at 1-800-829-9188.

All sellers must provide you with a contract or receipt at the time of sale showing the date, merchant's name and address, and a statement informing you of your right to cancel the contract within three days. After proper cancellation, the seller has 10 days to refund your money.

If you have doubts about the vendor or think you may have been the victim of a scam, call your local police department or county sheriff's office immediately. You can also contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Office at 1-800-300-1986 or by email at consumerhelp@state.sd.us. Be prepared to give as much information as you can about the vendor, including the name of the company and salesperson; company address and telephone number; and make, model and license number (if possible) of the vehicle the vendor was driving. Without tips from the public, law enforcement officials may not be able to catch illegal vendors before they move on to the next community.

For more information on transient vendors, contact the South Dakota Department of Revenue's toll-free helpline at 1-800-829-9188.

Transient Vendors are back in South Dakota for another season

Don't strike out



Get the facts before you buy

Most of the transient vendors who visit our state are legitimate. Some aren't.

Here are

THREE SIMPLE STEPS

to keep in mind if you're considering hiring a transient vendor to do repairs, construction, asphaltting or roofing services, or you're thinking of buying household cleaners, rugs, food, housewares, or magazine subscriptions from an out-of-state vendor:

STEP #1: Ask	STEP #2: Verify	STEP #3: Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For a price quote, in advance, in writing. ● If they have a permanent address and phone number. If the information is local, don't assume they're local. Some transient vendors have business cards printed with a local mailing service or motel address and number. ● About the product, warranties, & guarantees. ● To see their current South Dakota tax license. They MUST have one to do business in our state! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get a list of local references and CHECK THEM before making a decision. ● Get something in writing with the company's name, address and phone number. ● Find out if they have workman's compensation and general liability insurance. If they don't, YOU could be liable for accidents that occur on your property. ● Be careful about paying for work in advance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you have doubts about the vendor or think you may have been scammed, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Office at 1-800-300-1986 or by email at consumerhelp@state.sd.us. You can also contact your local police department or county sheriff's office. Be prepared to give as much information as you can about the vendor, including the name of the company and salesperson; company address & telephone number; and make, model, and license number (if possible) of the vehicle the vendor was driving.

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Are out-of-state vendors trying to sell you household cleaners, rugs, food, housewares, magazines, subscriptions, asphaltting or roofing services?

Thinking about hiring a transient vendor to do repairs or construction on your home or business?

Make sure they are on the level

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