

FRAUD ALERT

Door to Door “Home Security” Sales

The Fraud Prevention Taskforce was alerted of a door-to-door salesperson working in the North Hampton Neighborhood yesterday evening. The female salesperson was an alleged representative of “Platinum Security.” She claimed the company was offering “free service” to home owners willing to put a “Platinum Security” sign in their yard. Participating home owners would be contacted later by additional company representatives in order to determine their eligibility for other services. This salesperson used vague, high-pressure tactics, declined to provide any documents or business cards, and refused to take “No” for an answer. The residents of one home eventually closed the door on the woman. Undeterred, she continued to talk through their door. She then repeated the same scenario at several other homes.

Before contracting to do business with home security companies, the FTC recommends these useful tips:

- **Get references.** Find out how the equipment and services have performed for others.
- **Obtain written estimates** from several companies. Ask questions about who will install the system and how it will function. Be sure you know who will monitor the system, how much it will cost, and how often you will be billed.
- **Read the fine print.** Make sure the written contract includes all oral promises made by the salesperson.
- **Ask your police and fire departments** if you need to register your system, and if there are fines for responding to false alarms.
- **You can cancel the deal.** The FTC’s Cooling-Off Rule gives you three business days to cancel if you sign a contract in your home or anywhere that is not the seller’s permanent place of business — even if the system has already been installed. You don’t have to give a reason for canceling.

The Federal Trade Commission has additional tips on avoiding scams by these door-to-door salespersons on their website at: www.ftc.gov/opa/2011/04/homesecurity.shtm and www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/homes/real18.shtm



To Pursue Justice for All Citizens Within the Highest Standards of Ethical Behavior and Professionalism

**Fraud Assistance Hotline:
(314) 612-1412**