

News Release

FENSA supports the new ‘Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations’

FENSA supports the introduction of the new regulations; The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations that were introduced on 26 May 2008, and urges its Registered Businesses to ensure they are conforming.

The new regulations are designed to protect consumers and honest businesses by clamping down on unfair sales and marketing practices. Many detailed rules around trade descriptions and misleading price indications are now being replaced with a general ban on unfair trading. This broadly means that traders will have to act in a way that enables consumers to make free and informed purchasing decisions. The changes simplify consumer protection in the UK.

To become FENSA registered, businesses must meet various eligibility criteria which include making a commitment to complying with all the statutory regulations and the Buildings Regulations in force. Under The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations, businesses that deal fairly and honestly with customers may not need to change the way they work. However, businesses should still ensure that they are aware of these new regulations and take steps to review the way they are conducting their business to ensure they are complying. Businesses who do not comply with these new regulations may be investigated by the local authority trading standards service and other bodies. These lengthy investigations could take up valuable business time and businesses could be prosecuted and fined up to £5000.

Jon Vanstone, Director of Registered Businesses, FENSA commented “FENSA welcomes these new regulations as a positive step towards protecting consumers and honest businesses. For FENSA Registered Businesses, this will mean that there will be less unfair competition from installers who utilise less desirable practices for acquiring work. FENSA Registered Businesses can focus on self certifying with FENSA, without their reputation or efforts being compromised by installers who chose not to comply with FENSA’s high standards and with the building regulations.”

FENSA receives information from installers and consumers about illegal and rogue trading practices within the replacement window and door industry, such as misuse of the FENSA logo. This information is received through the website www.cowboystoppers.co.uk which enables information to be submitted anonymously. The information is reported to the relevant local authority Building Control department or trading standards for investigation.

To obtain practical advice on the new regulations, go to www.businesslink.gov.uk (England) or www.busesseye.org.uk (Wales). You can also contact your local trading standards service for advice. To find out about FENSA and how to become registered with FENSA, please go to www.fensa.org.uk.