Fast-buck furnace flim-flam artists attack in fall

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It's fall and the furnace flim-flam artists may be knocking at your door.

When you answer that ad in the paper, or telephone offer for a fall furnace "check up," you may be inviting a furnace sales person into your home.

The unscrupulous, fast-buck furnace operator typically comes into the home under the guise of giving your furnace a check-up, but soon announces, "You need a new furnace."

"They will point to normal discolorations, such as 'blossoms' on the heat exchanger, and say your furnace has gone bad," said Tom Leckie, vice president of Bergstrom's Inc., in Livonia.

Some rust on the heat exchanger is normal and does not affect its operation or safety, but the flim-flam operator will say you need a new furnace, said Leckie.

Another ruse is to use a very technical-looking electronic box with lights that flash. Guess what? They flash red, indicating your furnace is not operating efficiently and you'll need expensive parts or a new furnace.

They may even say the furnace might blow up or is putting out toxic fumes that could kill you.

Unfortunately, the elderly or unknowledgable homeowner are easy prey for the furnace fast-buck artist and may be sold a furnace for $3,500 to $4,000, that could be installed by a reputable dealer for $1,500 to $2,000.

"Just say, hold it. I'm getting a second opinion," said Leckie, whose company recommends second opinions when expensive repairs or replacement is needed.

That second opinion should be your own gas company or a long-standing reputable local dealer.

In doing 300 to 500 fall furnace tune-ups a year in the western Detroit suburbs, Bergstrom's technicians find only 10-15 cases where a new furnace is actually needed.

Always go for the tune-up or "clean and adjust," rather than a "check," said Leckie. The latter is often offered in big ads or phone calls for as low as $19.95, so low that you might suspect its only a door-opener for a sales pitch.

A tune-up costs only $35 to $50 from companies like Bergstrom's. It means you get 30 to 45 minutes of the technician's time, actually adjusting switches, lubricating blower bearings and cleaning out the "squirrel cage" compartment around the blower.

If a leaky heat exchanger is suspected, they'll do a lithium bromide test for toxic fumes.

"At that price, we're just breaking even," said Leckie. "But we build a helpful, trusting relationship, so that when a new furnce, air conditioner or plumbing is needed, they'll come to us."

In Bergstrom's case, honesty pays. They've been growing for 35 years in home and commercial work, and at 15 to 20 percent a year for the last five.

"Beware of any 'pressure selling' or scare tactics, " said Leckie. "It's a dead giveaway that the person is there to sell parts or furnaces. They are often working on commission."

A typical scam involves the service person phoning his office to report how bad or dangerous your furnace is. Guess what! It just so happens that someone else has cancelled an order and they have the very furnace you need sitting in their warehouse. You're in luck; they'll make you a deal if you'll have it installed today.

Within hours, they'll have the furnace in. The homeowner has no opportunity to get a second opinion or shop around, or take advantage of the three-day legal cooling off period in which a purchaser can cancel an order.

For the $4,000 the homeowner is likely to pay, a reputable firm like Bergstrom's can install a complete home comfort system: new furnace, air conditioner, air cleaner and thermostat.

Plus, you'll have a choice of brands such as Carrier, Rheem, Janitrol, York, Payne and TempStar, at Bergstrom's.

Many of the fast-buck furnace outfits change their name every year, so there's little chance to check up on them or collect on a warranty.

"Never trust a company that has its name on its trucks with magnetic, removable signs," said Leckie. "Or those that just show up knocking on your door and offering you a check-up special."

Check with your municipal building department and the Better Business Bureau before dealing with anyone you don't know, advised Leckie.

Anyone having a question on heating may phone Bergstrom's, Inc. at 522-1350, or stop by the office at 30633 Schoolcraft between Middlebelt and Merriman.

Mr. Z's Oktoberfest
Thursday, Oct. 15
Join us for Authentic Food Music & Drinks
27331 Five Mile Rd. (corner of Inkster) 537-5600
Early Bird Specials • 4-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday
$4.50 All dinners include: Soup, Salad, Potato or Rice, Hot Bread and Butter.
SUNDAY BUFFET $6.95 Noon-8 p.m.
NOW APPEARING - Jeff and the Atlantics - Friday & Saturday

MITCH HOUSEY'S
Open 11 A.M. Businessmen's Lunches
DINNERS from $7.95
FASHION SHOW Every Thursday 12 Noon to 2:00 P.M.
WORLD'S FINEST PRIME RIB with bone in dinner includes: salad, potato, vegetable, hot bread. $9.95
COCKTAIL HOUR 4-7 P.M. Daily
EVERY WED. Cocktail Hour 4 P.M.-Closing
NOW APPEARING... THE SHOWCASEMEN
NOW BOOKING BANQUETS (Small or Large)
RESERVE NOW FOR CHRISTMAS PARTIES
28500 Schoolcraft • Opposite Ladbroke DRC • LIVONIA 425-5520
AMPLE LIGHTED PARKING • DAILY MON-SAT. at 11:00 a.m. • OPEN SUNDAY at 4:00 P.M.

YOUR ATTIC SALE

Your Attic of Farmington Hills, located at 34875 Grand River, Farmington Hills, Michigan 48331, will hold a public sale on November 4, 1992 at 1:00 P.M. to satisfy the lein against the following tenants unless the liens are satisfied before the sale date.
David Dembczynski, E-221, Household, $285.88.
The contents of these units will be available for inspection the day prior to the sale and will be sold to the highest bidder. Sale will be held at Your Attic of Farmington Hills. Telephone number 478-0111.

BILL & BETTY FISCHER, Manager

Publish October 1 and 8, 1992

REGISTRATION NOTICE
for
GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1992
To the Qualified Electors of Farmington Hills
PRECINCTS 1 - 31
CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS
COUNTY OF OAKLAND, STATE OF MICHIGAN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the LAST DAY FOR RECEIVING APPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRATION for the above stated election will be:
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1992
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Electors who wish to vote in the General Election must be registered to vote no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 5, 1992. Persons may register at any Secretary of State branch office, any county, city or township clerk's office, and at the Farmington Hills City Clerk's office at 31555 Eleven Mile Road, Farmington Hills, Michigan, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
By state law you must be registered 30 days prior to the election to be eligible to vote.

KATHRYN A. DORNAN, City Clerk

Publish September 24 & October 1, 1992

SOUTHWESTERN OAKLAND CABLE COMMISSION
FOR THE CITIES OF FARMINGTON, NOVI AND FARMINGTON HILLS

PUBLIC HEARING MEETING NOTICE
45175 W. TEN MILE ROAD
NOVI, MICHIGAN 48375

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY - OCTOBER 14, 1992 7:30 P.M.

Please be advised that the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission will hold a public hearing for the purpose of hearing public comment on the operation of the cable television, Metrovision of Oakland County, in the three cities on October 14, 1992 at 7:30 P.M. at the Novi City Offices located at 45175 W. Ten Mile Road, Novi Michigan.
This is a public meeting and any interested person is invited to attend to address the commission or comments may be made in writing to the executive director at:

SOUTHWESTERN OAKLAND CABLE COMMISSION
24021 RESEARCH DRIVE
FARMINGTON HILLS, MICHIGAN 48335

Any comments received prior to the meeting will be read at this meeting. The public hearing may also be viewed "Live" on CATV Channel 13.

Respectfully Submitted,
LARK L. SAMOUELIAN,
Executive Director
Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission

Publish September 24 and October 1, 1992

Like to play the Lotto? Join our Millionaires league and your team can win $1000.00 worth of Lotto tickets. Limited space available call Lee or Ellie today for details 353-6540

PLUM HOLLOW LANES
21900 NINE MILE ROAD
at Lahser, Southfield
353-6540

Two Terrific Leagues need a few teams!

Every Thursday at 7:00 P.M. 5 man teams

Every Other Sunday evening couple's league bowls conveniently at 7:00 P.M.

Have trouble saving for that much needed vacation?

Join our new LAS VEGAS BOWLING LEAGUE. Everyone goes to Las Vegas at the end of the season! Call Ellie or Lee for complete details.
353-6540

BERGSTROM'S
plumbing • heating • cooling
30633 Schoolcraft, Livonia
(Between Merriman & Middlebelt)
HOURS; MON-FRI 7:30-6; SAT 9-4 522-1350
AUTUMN SAVINGS
Early Bird FURNACE INSTALLATION SPECIAL
from $1095.00 SAVE $200.00
Reg. $1295.00
INSTALLED & RUNNING
Model GFA050
For Homes Up to 1000 sq. ft.
Carrier
SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
POWER HUMIDIFIER
Save $80.00
$199.00
Regular $279.00
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 10-9-92
SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
ELECTRONIC AIR CLEANER
Save $200.00
$476.00
Regular $676.00
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 10-9-92
SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
40 GALLON WATER HEATER
Save $30.95
$319.00
Regular $349.95
SAME DAY INSTALLATION CALL FOR DETAILS
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 10-9-92
SUPER COUPON INSTALLATION SPECIAL
American Standard
PLEBE WHITE TOILET
Save $75.00
INSTALLED AND FLUSHING
$174.95
Regular $249.95
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 10-9-92

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OR A LOT!
At Laffrey's, we cut it the way you want it.
That's the thick or thin of it!
Laffrey's
STEAKS ON THE HEARTH
24201 West Seven Mile (at Telegraph)
(313) 538-4688
Present this ad and receive a complimentary appetizer with the purchase of any entree.
Limit one per table.
Not valid in conjunction with any other offer.
Dining - Cocktails - Banquets
Catered Outdoor Barbeques

FOUR SEASONS ENGINE EXCHANGE
12 Month/Unlimited* Mileage Warranty
Covers Parts & Labor 100%
Remanufactured engines for cars • trucks • marine • industrial
*this warranty available only on shop installation
12328 Woodbine • Redford
Jeffries Freeway (I-96)
(Dead End)
N
Woodbine
Four Seasons Engine Exchg.
Capitol
Telegraph
Plymouth Road
CALL
(313) 531-3100

REGISTRATION NOTICE
FOR
GENERAL ELECTION
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1992

To the Qualified Electors:
THE CITY OF FARMINGTON
COUNTY OF OAKLAND, STATE OF MICHIGAN

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT I WILL BE IN MY OFFICE
23600 LIBERTY STREET, FARMINGTON, MICHIGAN
ON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1992 — LAST DAY
From 8:30 o'clock a.m. until 4:30 o'clock p.m.

For the purpose of receiving applications for registration of the qualified electors in said City.

No person whose registration is received after 4:30 p.m. on that date shall be entitled to vote in the election of November 3, 1992.

Applications for registration may be made to the City Clerk of the City of Farmington, or any Secretary of State office, or elsewhere as permitted by law.

The City Clerk's office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for the nomination and election of candidates for various offices, and proposals. Persons who are currently registered need not reregister.

PATSY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk

Publish: September 24 and October 1, 1992