



# Consumer Protection Alert

## Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction

### Energy Audits/Unlicensed Prepaid Contractor

**Name:** Energy Affordability Services

**Affiliated Businesses:**

- Consumers Energy Services

#### Details

The Consumer Investigations Unit is warning Albertans about an unlicensed prepaid contracting business, EAS, operating online through social media. EAS is known to:

- Promote energy efficiency programs through Facebook social advertising suggesting consumers may qualify for government rebates.
- Initiate phone calls and uninvited, same-day home visits after consumers provide their contact information.
- Apply high pressure sales tactics to purchase HVAC systems following 'energy audits.'

In response, a **Directors Order** has been issued to EAS directing them to:

- Cease entering into prepaid contracts;
- Cease exerting undue pressure on consumers;
- Cease misleading or deceiving consumers;
- Cease engaging in direct sales for furnaces, air conditioners, water heaters and energy products;
- Cease soliciting, negotiating, or concluding consumer transactions for furnaces, air conditioners, water heaters and energy products; and
- Provide consumers with copies of prepaid contracting contracts.



#### Consumer Tips / Instructions

Prepaid contractors are required to be licensed with Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction.

Consumers are strongly encouraged to do their research prior to hiring a contractor for home renovations or repairs.

This includes:

- Asking to see municipal and provincial business licences;
- Establishing the total cost of the project;
- Having a written contract in place that states clear project deliverables and timelines; and
- Ensuring a verifiable payment method is used, such as a cheque, bank draft or e-transfer.

Anyone who is planning on hiring a contractor should review Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction's Home Improvements tipsheet. You can find its link on our Consumer and Business tips page ([www.alberta.ca/consumer-business-tips](http://www.alberta.ca/consumer-business-tips)).

You can also check if a business had any enforcement action taken against by using the Business Enforcement Search Tool located at [www.alberta.ca/lookup/business-enforcement-search-tool.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/lookup/business-enforcement-search-tool.aspx).

If you suspect a contractor is unlicensed, contravening Alberta's consumer protection laws, or avoiding work commitments, report it at 1-877-427-4088.

#### Consumer Investigations Unit

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