

Door to Door Solicitation

A message from the Minneapolis Police Department

June 5, 2015



Facts:

On Tuesday June 2, 2015 around 5:45 pm, officers were dispatched to a suspicious person call. Upon arrival, they found a male trying to sell magazines door to door. Officers advised the male that, solicitors must be registered or licensed with the City of Minneapolis to sell items door to door. Because the seller couldn't produce documentation, they told him to stop soliciting and sent him on his way. They also advised him that if he was seen soliciting again he would be arrested.

Not long afterward, he was seen on another block trying to sell magazines door-to-door again. Officers booked him in Hennepin County Jail for peddling without a license.

The company he was soliciting for had dropped a number of people off on the street. This company tries to lure customers by claiming that they are selling magazines to try to help people turn their lives around. The solicitors are telling potential customers that the proceeds of the sales are used to give the solicitor a second chance in life or to overcome youthful hardships. The magazines are never delivered.

Further investigation by the responding officers and the Police Licensing division showed that the solicitors were tied to three different companies: *Urban Development Solutions*, *Graceful Hands* and *Moving Forward*. All three companies have multiple complaints from customers alleging that the magazine sales were fraudulent; that they had been charged money and never received any magazines, and that the cost of the subscriptions was unusually high. The Better Business Bureau gave the company an F grade based on multiple complaints, failures to respond, and unauthorized use of the BBB name or trademark.

What You Can Do:

- ✓ Door-to-door sales require a license and/or registration in Minneapolis. Ask to see the official Minneapolis ID of any solicitors. To see images of the ID and find more information, check the following two links which detail what is required or allowed:
 - Solicitors, peddlers, and transient merchants license: <http://go.usa.gov/35aFG> (information from *Business Licensing which includes details on registration/licensing*)
 - What you need to know about door-to-door sales in Minneapolis: <http://go.usa.gov/35amW>
- ✓ Research any company/organization, whether charitable or not, that tries to sell you items or solicit money from you. Simply doing a computer search of the company name and checking with the [Better Business Bureau \(bbb.org\)](http://bbb.org) can give you an idea of any potential issues or complaints that other customers have previously filed.
- ✓ Call 911 on suspicious activity at the time it occurs.
- ✓ If you are a company that wishes to solicit or peddle door-to-door, make sure you are properly registered or licensed with the City. Find the application at <http://go.usa.gov/35CpQ>.

For further information, you can research Minneapolis City Ordinance Chapter 332 for requirements for solicitors, peddlers, and transient merchants.