



## Who We Are

Attorney General  
Tom Miller  
Office Directory

## What We Do

Protecting Consumers  
Fighting Crime  
Helping Victims of  
Crime  
Working for Farmers  
Protecting the  
Environment  
Raising Child Support  
Awareness  
Representing State  
Government  
Issuing Attorney  
General Opinions  
Enforcing Tobacco Laws  
Protecting Utility  
Customers

## Resources

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## Consumer Advisory Bulletin-August 2004

**Warning: Door-to-Door Meat Scams**

Fraudulent door-to-door meat sellers have been plaguing Iowans again. Here's the scam: A salesperson shows up at your door selling meat or seafood he says is left over from a delivery that fell through. He says you can buy the meat at extremely low prices, but the meat turns out to be very expensive and low-quality -- and you aren't able to cancel.

A sure sign of a scam is a seller who tells you a local restaurant "couldn't take the whole order," or that a neighbor to whom the meat was to be delivered was not home. Such come-on lines usually are completely false. They just lead you to think you can get a great bargain -- if you make a snap decision to buy. That's a recipe for deception.

Such scam-artists often fail to obtain required licenses, and they often fail to give customers the required written and oral three-day cancellation notices. They often also violate the law by failing to tell you the price per pound, as required by state law.

The Attorney General's Office has taken consumer-fraud action against several of these companies in recent months, getting refunds for customers who felt deceived.

**Follow these tips to avoid being cheated by door-to-door meat or food sellers:**

- **Be wary of door-to-door meat and seafood sellers who stop unannounced.** There are some legitimate companies that sell food door to door (especially those that come to deliver orders placed by consumers), but you need to be very careful.
- **Shop for the best prices -- and focus on price per pound.** Don't be swayed by price-per-serving claims. That's a meaningless and bogus comparison.
- **Insist on written notification of your three-day right to cancel.** Iowa law gives you three business days to cancel a purchase at your door, and get a full refund for any unused product. The law also requires the seller to tell you of this right, and to give you two written notices of the right. Don't buy from any door-to-door seller who does not give you the proper cancellation notices.
- **Write down license plate numbers and descriptions.** Help law enforcement officials by recording pertinent information about these scam-artists and contacting your local authorities. Some sellers may be wanted in other states or localities.

Some door-to-door food sellers are legitimate. To check whether complaints have been received against a company -- or to report a door-to-door food scam -- write to the Consumer Protection Division, Hoover Building, Des Moines, IA 50319. Call 515-281-5926 or toll-free at 1-888-777-4590. The web address is [www.iowaAttorneyGeneral.org](http://www.iowaAttorneyGeneral.org).

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