

## Business Rates Advice

'Cowboy' rating advisers may be cold calling in your area offering big savings in your business rate bills!

Please be aware though – these operators are unlikely to be professionally qualified and often make fraudulent promises to secure large reductions in your rates bill so as to obtain early payments from you of up to several hundred pounds!

**Once you've paid them you are unlikely to be able to seek redress, except through the courts and an ill-considered appeal could even *increase* your rates bill.**

### PLEASE BE AWARE!

Four Claims to check

1. **“We have a team of fully qualified professionals”**

Do they? Check the firm and the individuals with the professional bodies quoted.

2. **“We have achieved big %%% reductions for several clients”**

Demand the names and telephone numbers of past clients and ring them to check.

3. **“We can get huge %%% reductions on your property”**

If they make these claims before making a **full** investigation of your property, they may be 'cowboys'.

4. **“You will have nothing to pay unless we succeed”.**

(i) Whatever their salesman may say, demand to see a copy of their contract.

(ii) Some contracts contain disguised fees. Do not believe stories that you will have to pay when the Valuation Office acknowledges receipt of an appeal. Not only are you able to lodge an appeal yourself, but the VO acknowledges receipt of **all** appeals free of charge.

(iii) Be careful if the contract entitles the firm to a percentage of the reduction in Rateable Value. This may not necessarily lead to a saving in the rates you have to pay.