

**Media Release**

**1 in 3 Ontario families have had a negative experience with a door-to-door water heater salesperson**

**(May 22, 2013, Toronto)** Recent polling undertaken by the Homeowner Protection Centre (HPC) shows that more than 1 in 3 Ontario families (almost 36%) have had a negative experience with a door-to-door water heater salesperson.

The news should come as little surprise given that complaints about door-to-door water heater rentals have been the second most frequent received by the Ministry of Consumer Services for two years running. Total complaints received as of 2012 were over 3,200.

Almost 60% of those polled stated they would be more likely to support a provincial party that would provide greater protection for consumers in Ontario with respect to door-to-door water heater sales. The call for consumer protection was consistent regardless of voting intent for the Liberals, PCs or NDP.

The poll also showed that over 60% of Ontarians agree that there needs to be legislation in Ontario to regulate water heater door-to-door salespersons. The support for regulation was even stronger in Southwest Ontario and Metro Toronto, with over 80% of respondents in each region agreeing with the need to regulate door-to-door water heater sales.

Recently, the Ontario government introduced *Bill 55, Stronger Protection for Ontario Consumers Act, 2013*. Features of Bill 55 include doubling the cooling-off period for consumers to 20 days, prohibiting the installation of equipment during the cooling-off period, and the requirement of contracts to be explained in clear, easy to understand language.

At the moment Bill 55 is held up in the legislature at second reading, and has yet to be referred to one of the committees of the legislature for public hearings. "The concern is that until the legislation is passed, the intensity and frequency of bad practices that deceive ever more Ontarians, including seniors, newcomers, and those on fixed incomes may continue unabated," stated Michael Lio, Executive Director of the Homeowner Protection Centre. "HPC encourages each Ontario MPP to support the quick passage of Bill 55 to protect consumers from unethical door-to-door sales tactics."

HPC created a website ([waterheaterdoortodoor.com](http://waterheaterdoortodoor.com)) to give Ontario consumers a voice and platform to encourage the legislature to enact changes that offer protection from deceptive door-to-door water heater sales tactics. On the website, Ontarians can sign a petition to support the quick passage of Bill 55, send a letter to their MPP and share their personal stories. This website serves an important purpose, since more often than not people aren't aware of their rights when it comes to door-to-door salespeople. This site contains valuable tips on what to look for when a salesperson comes to the door.

The omnibus poll of 1000 voting-age Ontarians has a margin of error of +/- 3.1%, 19/20 times. Interviews were conducted between May 10 and May 12, 2013.

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**To arrange interviews, please contact:**

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*The **Homeowner Protection Centre** was established to advocate for homeowners and their important issues. It is a network of homeowners, builders, renovators, and home product and service suppliers who are committed to improving housing and housing-related services across Canada. The HPC is not-for-profit, and is supported through memberships and donations by homeowners and companies. [www.homeownerprotection.ca](http://www.homeownerprotection.ca)*