

CORONA VIRUS SCAM ALERT

WEST YORKSHIRE TRADING STANDARDS NEWSLETTER

The latest scams circulating in West Yorkshire targeting people online, by post and in person.

What Scams are trending at the moment in West Yorkshire?

Like other large organisations, TV Licensing has seen an increase in fraudsters sending scam emails to the public posing as genuine TV Licensing communications. To help fight the fraudsters, TV Licensing is supporting the work of the National Cyber Security Centre and Action Fraud and is asking people to STOP – CHECK – ASK if they receive a suspicious email.

- STOP – Scammers will attempt to trick you into giving away your personal or bank details. Always be wary of letters, emails, texts or phone calls that promise you money or a refund.
- CHECK – The sender is correct and have they used your name? Are there any spelling or grammar mistakes? You should also check if it's the correct licence number, you can check your licence number on the TV Licensing website.
- ASK – If you're ever unsure about a communication you've received, it's always best to ask someone – perhaps a friend or a trusted advisor. Or you can contact TV Licensing via www.tvl.co.uk/scams or call Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

Scams Trending Regionally & Nationally

- Counterfeit PPE sales are on the rise as businesses begin to reopen and the demand for the products increases. Consider making your own, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering>.
- A number of reports have been received regarding cold calling from a female purporting to be from the UCLH (University College London Hospital) claiming to be from the "conducting a Covid-19 trial on the over 70's" which would involve someone visiting their home addresses. Caller sounded believable and provided a phone number with the London area code of 0207.
- Letters have been received claiming to be from the 'Covid19 Relief Lottery' with fake announcements that the recipient has won £300,085 the letters are being sent from a Canary Wharf, London address.

In issue 7 we mentioned....

We had reports of traders targeting elderly and vulnerable residents, operating in Dewsbury/Batley area and Pontefract, offering driveway cleaning and property maintenance services, with victims being overcharged and receiving substandard work.

Update

Suspects have been arrested out of county, vehicles seized, with victim statements being gathered and enquiries continuing into the alleged offending as above.

Further reports of other doorstep traders operating pushy sales tactics with vulnerable residents, offering similar driveway and jet wash cleaning, with evidence of overcharging, substandard services and charging for work not agreed.

We continue to receive reports of doorstep traders using pushy and sometimes aggressive sales tactics to intimidate people, usually the vulnerable and isolated members of our society into using their services. There is evidence of traders increasing prices as the work is done claiming that more work was required than originally thought.

HOW TO SPOT A ROGUE TRADER

- **If they claim to have been working on a neighbour's property and notice your property requires attention- AVOID THEM. This is a common way for them to gain your trust, if your neighbour is using them, why shouldn't you?**
- **They're able to start the work straight away. Great traders come from word of mouth and usually you will need to wait a short time before they can schedule you in. Traders cold calling are traders you should be wary of.**
- **On the day discounts, another tactic to pressure you into using their services. 'Today only' deals are widely recognised as a form of pressure selling.**
- **Traders that only accept cash payment- genuine, honest traders will accept bank transfers without hesitation. Cash can't be traced!**
- **Payment up front, NEVER pay upfront, in full and in cash! It's likely they won't return.**

**COVID19 HAS TAUGHT US THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY.
IF YOU SPOT PEOPLE TARGETING YOUR COMMUNITY, REPORT IT!**

SCAMS STILL IN CIRCULATION**PHISHING SCAM**

Members of the public have been targeted by scam messages which appear to be from the NHS's Test and Trace scheme telling them to self-isolate.

These typically arrive in the form of a text or email from fraudsters with a link asking the recipient to submit personal information which criminals then use to steal their identity or hack into their bank accounts

The week in stats...

West Yorkshire = 13 COVID-19 intelligence logs submitted from 08.06.2020 to 14.06.2020 and 19 complaints / enquiries

COVID-19 Intelligence logs for Yorkshire & Humber Region from 08.06.2020 to 14.06.2020 = 23

Total Amount of National Trading Standards Sanitised Intelligence Logs = 5441 (01.03.2020- 14.06.2020)

Scams Awareness Fortnight 2020

Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline's annual Scams Awareness campaign from the 15th to 28th June aims to create a network of confident, alert consumers who know what to do when they spot a scam. This year protecting people against scams is more important than ever. The coronavirus crisis means more people are facing issues - from employment and debt, to housing and health - resulting in more people being in vulnerable situations. #ScamAware
Find out more via our social media platforms.

Report complaints to

Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline:

0808 223 1133



@wytradstandards



@SAFERProject

Report to us:

New mailbox to deal with reports of Covid-19 Scams in West Yorkshire:
Covid19.Scams@wyjs.org.uk

Report scams to

Action Fraud:

0300 123 2040

