

Computer Scam Still in Circulation

Staffordshire Trading Standards are receiving increasing reports from people who have been contacted over the telephone by companies claiming they can protect home computers from viruses.

Alerts have been sent out regarding this type of scam on numerous occasions over recent months; however residents are still calling to report being contacted by these scammers. The scammers claim that your computer had been infected with a virus, and for a fee they will be able to clear the virus, and protect you from any future computer infections.

They may be operating under the guise of Microsoft or Windows, or for companies such as Supportonclick. Their tactic is to convince the user that something is wrong with their PC and purchase software that they do not actually need. The fraudsters use leading, generalised questioning techniques that often have the effect of convincing the user that their individual circumstances are known to the calling company.

Trading Standards advise that effective online security is crucial, and users should ensure that their PCs are running up-to-date anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software. However, good security need not be complicated or expensive – many security vendors provide free versions of their software for personal use.

PC users are advised to read up on online security via www.getsafeonline.org. They also advise turning off any 'auto-preview' features in their email software.

If you think you may have been a victim of this type scam, please report it to Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

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All our alerts are available in a range of formats and languages, including large print. Please contact Community Development if this would be helpful to you, or to someone you know.

Address: 14 Martin Street, Stafford, ST16 2LG.

community.development@staffordshire.gov.uk

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