

Volunteer Support Team - Watch Liaison Office
nhw.thanet@kent.pnn.police.uk

01843 222214 (0900 to 1200) mon - fri

ANNOUNCEMENTS

43 Million Are Caught In Fake Anti-Virus Net

Up to 43 million people could have given their bank details to cyber criminals after being duped by fake anti-virus software online, a web security firm has found.

Figures published by Symantec suggest 93% of the people scammed downloaded the rogue programs by choice after being tricked into believing it was legitimate.

The company estimate that some cyber criminals are earning more than £850,000 a year from the ruse. Web users fall prey to the scam when they click on links, pop-ups or flashing adverts warning them their computer is infected. The fake program then appears to run a virus check which tells the user their PC is infected and asks them to pay for it to be cleaned up. But downloading the software can give criminals access to bank details and computer files.

Symantec found 250 rogue programs were downloaded 43 million times in the 12 months to July 2009.

Top Five Rogue Security Downloads

1.) SpywareGuard2008

2.) AntiVirus 2008

3.) AntiVirus 2009

4.) Spyware Secure

5.) XP AntiVirus

Source: Symantic research June 2008-June 2009

Ben Camm-Jones from Web User magazine told Sky News Online there are ways to spot a fake site.

"You should be protected from this type of malware if you keep your browser and anti-virus software up to date," he said.

"If messages telling you that your PC has an infection pop up when you visit a website, simply close your browser down and use your existing anti-virus software to scan your PC. And if you think a warning message on your PC is suspect, carefully check spelling and grammar - there could be a tell-tale mistake."

<http://news.sky.com/skynews/Home/Technology/Fake-A>

HOME SAFETY VISITS - COULD YOU SAVE A LIFE?

In Kent there were 13 deaths from fire in the year from April 2008. In 5 of those cases there was no smoke alarm fitted, in two cases an alarm was present but not working. All 13 tragedies involved people over the age of 40, with the majority over the age of 65. All but one person were men.

Kent Fire & Rescue Service provides free Home Safety Visits, which take about 30 minutes and free smoke alarms can be fitted where needed. For further information, phone Freephone 0800-923-7000.

PACT MEETINGS

WHAT IS A P.A.C.T. MEETING AND WHY SHOULD I BE THERE?

It recently became apparent that many people are unclear as to what a PACT meeting is, and their opportunity to become involved in local community issues is being missed. The following is a presis of a presentation on the subject given by Inspector Terry Chuter to a Neighbourhood Watch group in Thanet.

PACT stands for Partners and Communities Together. It is a network of local agencies and community representatives who work together to improve the neighbourhoods they serve. The PACT process has developed over the last five years to cover nearly every Ward in East Kent and was conceived as part of a government initiative to identify ways of engaging and involving the whole community. Also to gather the views and opinions of local groups and organisations.

This is achieved through consultation with the community, to investigate and identify problems of amenity, crime and disorder, community safety and general quality of life issues. Identify the agencies and organisations responsible for improving recognised issues, and liaise with their representatives to make the required actions effective.

WHO CAN BE A P.A.C.T. MEMBER?

The PACT panel is made up of various representatives including the beat officer, local councillors, council officers, residents and almost any person who has a say in how their community is run, and how they would like to see it change. You could compare it to a residents meeting where you have the people sitting in front of you who could actually make change happen. The meetings themselves are not run by the police, but they do have a

presence. At each meeting the group discuss the issues that concern their communities and as a result up to 3 priorities are set with actions for various partners to address and report back on the progress.

IS THERE A ROLE FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH IN PACT MEETINGS?

Neighbourhood Watch should have a key role in the process. The type of community spirit that led to members joining Neighbourhood Watch are exactly the people who should attend the meetings. Some PACT meetings generate a very high attendance whilst others attract limited interest and perhaps there are issues surrounding the promotion of some meetings. They are however an ideal opportunity for the community to express any concerns, or how they feel that their quality of life might be improved.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Successes have included clearing graffiti, tackling speeding issues, traffic calming, rubbish clearance, tackling anti-social behaviour, dog fouling and generally improving the quality of life for all concerned. The meetings are held every 4 - 6 weeks within the community and are advertised locally, on the Kent Police website (<http://www.kent.police.uk/>)

Where ever you live, your views are important - why not attend your next local PACT meeting and make them heard.
Terry McCormick - East Kent Watch Liaison Officer

GOODBYE 'CORGI' HELLO 'GAS SAFE'

It was announced on 17th March, that as from 1st April 2009, the CORGI Register for approved gas fitters will be called the Gas Safe Register and will be managed by Capita who are trying to get Gas Safe Register logo on customer's utility bills.

Installers will need to be registered on the scheme to operate legally.

The director of public awareness at Gas Safe Register has said that "our over-arching message is always to use a Gas Safe Register engineer, check their ID every time and do not give rogue traders a chance."

*

STOP A CRIME!

Getting in a flap!

There have been several incidents recently where burglaries have been committed by gaining entry via cat flaps and letterboxes. This method of entry is unusual, but not unique. An arm or implement is inserted through the cat flap or letterbox, capable of reaching and turning the door knob or handle from the inside. This method of entry is obviously very quiet.

There are two effective ways to combat this:

1. Fit a deadlock - it can only be turned by use of a key.
2. Fit a wire box around the letterbox to catch the letters, and, in the case of the cat flap, a short tunnel. This will prevent access to the door knob from outside the door.

STOP A CRIME!

Protecting your Identity - Avoid 'Auto Complete'

Software that offers to remember your personal details to save you time when you next fill out a form on-line should be avoided. While the software itself is not fraudulent, it can make it easier for criminals to access personal information about you if they successfully access your PC.

**

STOP A CRIME!

Burglars don't like to be seen:

Make your property visible to passers by and neighbours. Trim back trees, hedges, and shrubbery so that intruders in your garden can be more easily noticed and their activities observed by others.

Police Community Support Officers/Thanet

This is a comprehensive list of contact details for all current police Community Support Officers in Thanet.

- PCSO Burnett 57077 - Birchington North/South 0777 2226230
- PCSO Morris 57083 - Dane Park/Margate Central/Open Spaces 0777 2113193
- PCSO Ward-Davies 57087 - Cliftonville East 0777 2113190
- PCSO Askew 56775 - Cliftonville West 07972 004453
- PCSO Cogger 56685 - Cliftonville West 0777 226029
- PCSO Underwood 56212 - Dane Valley 0777 2225975
- PCSO Meek 56200 - Dane Valley 0777 2225973
- PCSO Butterworth 56550 - Garlinge 0777 2226120

PCSO Stovold 55471 - Margate Central 07980 684136
PCSO Comley 56686 - Margate Central 0777 2226180
PCSO Frampton 56634 - Salmestone 0777 2226185
PCSO Raisbeck 56581 - Westbrook 0777 2226149
PCSO Porter 56655 - Westgate On Sea 0777 2226196
PCSO Williams 54895 - Bradstowe (Broadstairs) 07989 992460
PCSO Hollier 56726 - Central Harbour/Pegwell (Ramsgate) 0777 2226186
PCSO White 56801 - Nethercourt/Eastcliffe (Ramsgate) 0777 2225969
PCSO Foreman 56561 - Newington (Ramsgate) 0777 2226130
PCSO Prentice 56654 - Newington (Ramsgate) 0777 2226199
PCSO Mimran 56523 - Northwood (Ramsgate) 0777 2226082
PCSO Lamberton 56193 - St Peters 0777 2225971
PCSO Platt 56535 - Sir Moses Montefiore (Ramsgate) 0777 2226108
PCSO Radley 56264 - Viking (Broadstairs) 0777 2225962

EAST KENT HOME SAFETY ROADSHOW

The Homesafety Roadshow is a presentation available to pensioner groups throughout the East Kent policing area.

It provides short talks from the Police/Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer, Terry McCormick on doorstep crime and distraction burglary, a Community Fire Safety Officer on reducing the risk of fire, and a Kent Trading Standards Officer on consumer rights. The Roadshows also provide an opportunity for pensioners to have their security upgraded at no cost. Door locks, window locks, door chains and door viewers can all be provided and fitted free of charge in partnership with Help the Aged. 'Seniorlink' care lines incorporating bogus caller protection are also available at the cost of £1:63p per week (subject to financial criteria)

Kent Fire and Rescue can provide and fit smoke detectors at no cost and also carry out free home fire safety checks. The Roadshow presentation lasts about 45 minutes and there is always time for your questions. To date, the Roadshow has addressed more than 8,000 pensioners in the Thanet area, where police statistics indicate the fewest number of pensioners targeted for burglary in the county.

The Homesafety Roadshow is a free presentation, so if your group or association would like to hear it, then contact the Watch Liaison Officer, Terry McCormick at Margate Police Station on 01843 222214.

WARNING - DOORSTEP CRIMINALS

Doorstep criminals operate everywhere and East Kent is no exception. NEVER allow any caller at your door into your house unless you know them.

ALWAYS use the door chain until you have FULLY verified the identity of unknown callers.

If you are approached by any person offering to carry out repairs to your property, turn them away and call Kent Trading Standards on 08454 04 05 06 to report the incident. The office of Kent Trading Standards is open Monday to Friday 8:00am to 6:30pm and on Saturdays 9:00am to 1:00pm. You can also report 'rogue traders' on www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent

**

WHY A NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME?

Have you sometimes thought about establishing a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in your street, but not known how to go about it, never got around to it, or just wondered what's the point? If so, consider this:

About 45% of households in Thanet belong to a scheme. During 2007, 93% of the area's dwelling burglaries occurred in non Neighbourhood Watch streets. Nationally and locally your property is statistically TEN TIMES less likely to be subjected to crime if in a scheme. In recognition of this, many insurance companies will offer discounts off insurance premiums to those in registered Watch Schemes.

Estate Agents have stated that Neighbourhood Watch membership can help to make a property more sellable.

A Neighbourhood Watch scheme can reawaken a community spirit among the residents of a street.

It costs nothing in financial terms (street signs are provided free) and very little in time to establish and maintain an effective Watch Scheme.

IF you are now thinking again, and want to hear more about the initial steps, call me, Terry McCormick on (01843) 222214 or e-mail terry.mccormick@kent.pnn.police.uk. I would be with you to assist in setting up the scheme, and available to provide liaison and support thereafter.

**

THEY ARE PHISHING FOR YOU - DON'T GET CAUGHT!

Kent Trading Standards wish to warn consumers about a number of e-mail messages in circulation that purport to be from e-bay. The mails look very convincing, but are intended to gain personal financial information or access your account.

These phishing e-mails may ask you to update your details or ask you to pay for an item you have never ordered. BE VERY CAUTIOUS. Do not click on any of the links in the message and forward it to both your internet service provider and spoof@ebay.co.uk

If you have an e-bay account, and you receive a suspicious message purporting to be from e-bay, do not open it, but look at your own message folder in 'My Ebay'. Genuine messages from E-bay should also appear in this folder. The E-bay website does feature advice on how to protect your account.

For information on your rights as a consumer please contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

NEED A TRUSTWORTHY TRADER?

Did you know that Kent Trading Standards can provide you with details of reliable local tradesmen and women to carry out work around your home and garden?

The 'Buy with Confidence' scheme brings together a list of gardeners, plumbers, builders and many other types of businesses from all over Kent, which have been individually checked for trustworthiness and compliance with consumer protection laws. Trading Standards Officers visit and vet every applicant and only if they pass stringent checks, are they accepted onto the scheme and can then display the 'Buy with Confidence' logo.

Once a business becomes a member of the scheme, they are constantly monitored by the Trading Standards Service to ensure that their standards are maintained. Feedback is invited from their customers and re-visits are carried out. Whilst it cannot be guaranteed that nothing will ever go wrong, if you have a problem with a member of the scheme, they are required to deal with any complaints in a professional manner. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the Trading Standards Service will attempt to assist in reaching a solution.

The original scheme was launched in 1999 by Hampshire County Council, and it has grown to include a number of other Trading Standards Services.

The website now features hundreds of businesses in over 250 trade categories. You can Buy with Confidence knowing that each company has signed up to the standards of customer service set out in the scheme rules.

For details of firms you know you can trust visit the Council's interactive consumer website at www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk or telephone 08454 04 05 06.

****NEVER DEAL WITH COLD CALLERS ON YOUR DOORSTEP - NEVER INVITE COLD CALLERS INTO YOUR HOME****

TRADERS, if you think your business could make the grade and would like more information, contact the Buy with Confidence team on 01233 652385 or e-mail to buywithconfidence@kent.gov.uk

**FOR ADVICE ON CONSUMER ISSUES PLEASE CONTACT: CONSUMER DIRECT on 08454 04 05 06
Kent County Council,
Trading Standards,
Advice and Education,
PO Box 71,
Ashford, Kent,
TN24 8WB**