



Renfrewshire  
Council

# Trading Standards

**e-update**

**Back Catalogue**

**No's 1 to 24**

September 2008 - December 2011

## e-update 1: Sent 09.09.08

### DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE DODGY?

[www.ripofftipoff.net](http://www.ripofftipoff.net) was developed by Trading Standards and the BERR (Business working together to help create a prosperous Britain through Modern Markets and Confident Consumers.

Information is wanted about:

- Dubious website businesses
- Counterfeit alcohol and cigarettes
- Illegal sales of alcohol, tobacco, knives & fireworks to children
- Cowboy builders or tradesmen
- Car clockers
- Counterfeiters
- Aggressive selling

Your information could help us to stop someone else being conned or ripped-off

Visit [www.ripofftipoff.net](http://www.ripofftipoff.net) for more information

## e-update 2: Sent 20.1.08

### SCAM WARNING

Please forward this e-mail on to anyone you think may find this information useful.

"Warrington Trading Standards have contacted Phonepay Plus following complaints about text messages consisting of the text "!! URGENT!! Large parcel awaiting delivery, please call now on +23222270680 for delivery tomorrow INTERNATIONAL PARCEL DELIVERIES"

Calls to the number will be charged at £1.50 per minute. The message is 6 minutes long.

Phonepay plus advise that they have contacted the networks in order that they bar access. Please do not contact Phonepay plus as they are aware of the scam which appears to be connected to Sierra Leone. It may take 24 hours to block the number."

Please note that in the past this scam has also been operated by posting 'delivery cards' through your door which look very similar to well known delivery companies and/or the Post Office. Always be vigilant when you receive a card through your door that asks you to call a phone number. You can check a phone number online at <http://whocallsme.com/>.

## e-update 3: Sent 24.11.08

### UNDERAGE CIGARETTE SALES

Shocked trading standards officers in Renfrewshire have found 80% of shops visited were willing to sell cigarettes to a 15 year-old girl during an undercover operation to test the law.

The startling findings come just weeks after the first anniversary of new regulations, which raised the legal age for buying cigarettes from 16 to 18 years old.

Test purchases were made in 36 shops in Renfrew and Paisley town centres during October. 29 shops sold cigarettes to the fresh-faced, 15 year-old volunteer.

Councillor Marie McGurk, convener of Renfrewshire Council's environment and infrastructure policy board, said: "It literally takes your breath away that so many local traders are willing to ignore the law. In the past few years, our trading standards officers have carried out a number of test purchasing operations but this year's results are the worst ever."

"The age limit is there for a very good reason – a child who starts smoking aged 14 or less is five times more likely to die of lung cancer than someone who starts at 24 or older, and 15 times more likely to die of lung cancer than someone who never smokes at all."

"Every year, smoking kills around 600 people in Renfrewshire."

"There is no excuse for these appalling figures. The Scottish Government sent all of Renfrewshire's 485 retailers an information pack about the increase in the age limit. Many of the shops which sold cigarettes to our tester were displaying posters about the new, higher age limit."

"We are sending a clear warning to traders. Our trading standards officers will be carrying out more test purchasing operations and traders who sell cigarettes to children will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal."

Selling tobacco to someone under 18 years old carries a maximum fine of £2,500.

The rules for test purchasing say that the candidate must be at least 18 months younger than the age limit for the product that they are attempting to buy. They should also look young enough to prompt the retailer to ask their age.

Renfrewshire Council is looking for volunteers to take part in its test purchasing programme. It is also urging

anyone who suspects a retailer may be selling cigarettes to under 18s to contact trading standards on 0141 840 3460, or email [ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

## e-update 4: Sent 12.12.08

### CHRISTMAS DANGER FROM FAKE GAMES CONSOLES

Fake games consoles and adaptors are potentially putting Christmas consumers' lives in danger, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) have warned.

Hundreds of imported counterfeit games consoles seized at UK freight depots were found to have been supplied with potentially dangerous power adaptors. The goods had been purchased from a range of websites, mainly based in Asia, which claimed the items were "genuine Nintendo products." Many of the consoles, which are fake versions of the popular Nintendo DS and DS Lite had been bought for around £40, instead of the usual retail price of £100.

Nintendo confirmed that the Nintendo DS and DS Lite consoles were counterfeit, and the power adaptors being supplied with the product were not Nintendo manufactured and were, in fact, potentially dangerous, since they had not been electronically tested and do not meet strict UK safety standards.

HMRC's Head of Intellectual Property rights Pamela Rogers said: "UK consumers must be vigilant when purchasing goods online. Buy from a reputable or regulated site and, if purchasing from outside the UK or a new website, research the site - check all the facts before you buy."

"At best, these consoles would have led to disappointment on Christmas morning; at worst, they could have caused serious harm or injury."

"Counterfeit goods also cause considerable damage to the UK economy by undermining genuine UK retailers and small businesses who are honest and abide by the rules."

### COUNTERFEIT STING

A dodgy dealer was caught with a huge haul of Nike trainers worth a whopping half a million pounds when Renfrewshire Trading Standards officers swooped in an undercover sting.

Greedy Mark McLintock, from Paisley, hoped to make a fortune by flogging the footwear through the eBay internet site.

But the shoe was on the other foot when the trading standards team, who were

trawling through the website, spotted the too-good-to-be-true bargain.

Paisley Sheriff Court heard the trendy trainers sell in the shops for £120 a pair, but McLintock, who used the online name 'Absolut Angel', was offering them on eBay for the knockdown price of £15.

Members of the trading standards team posed as bona fide customers to snare 29-year-old McLintock when they inquired about making a bulk buy.

He led them to a container yard in Abercorn Street, Paisley, and showed off his stock of thousands of pairs of counterfeit Nike trainers, complete with the company's famous 'Swoosh' logo.

The court heard that the haul would have sold for £500,000 if the footwear had been genuine and sold through a reputable retailer.

When he appeared in the dock, McLintock pleaded guilty to conducting a business as an eBay trader known as Absolut Angel with a view to making financial gain for himself or others and offering Nike trainers for sale, contrary to the Trade Marks Act of 1994. McLintock was sentenced to 12 months in jail.

#### **Paisley Daily Express link:**

<http://www.paisleydailyexpress.co.uk/renfrewshire-news/scottish-news/2008/12/05/fake-training-shoe-man-jailed-87085-22415564/>

#### **STV News at 6 link:**

<http://video.stv.tv/bc/news-scotlandtoday-six-20081205/>

Please be careful when purchasing goods online. If a bargain seems to good to be true, in mostly likely is.

If you suspect you have purchased counterfeit goods, e-mail us on [ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk) or telephone us on 0141 840 3146.

Be vigilant this festive season.  
**Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Renfrewshire Council Trading Standards Team**

## **e-update 5: Sent 20.01.09**

### **RENFREWSHIRE TRADING STANDARDS - SURVEY**

Trading Standards would like to know your opinion on certain aspects of services we offer. Please take a couple of minutes to complete the following survey. Your views are important to us and shapes the future of our service to you.

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=46fD3OflvufH\\_2bsclMaS686w\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=46fD3OflvufH_2bsclMaS686w_3d_3d)  
Many thanks for your time.

## **e-update 6: Sent 04.02.09**

### **URGENT PRESS RELEASE**

APACS, the UK payments association, has today (30 January 2009) advised about the recent rise in popularity of an old-style phone scam that involves fraudsters duping unsuspecting cardholders into revealing their card details by pretending to be from either their bank, card company or one of the international card schemes – Visa and MasterCard.

The scam begins with the fraudster phoning up, typically claiming to be from the security or fraud department and saying that their records have flagged up a fraudulent transaction on the victim's card. By seeming to offer assistance, the caller hopes to gain their victim's trust.

The fraudster, who may already have some details about the person they are phoning - such as their address and card number - is really trying to find out the three-digit security code on the back of their victim's card. The conman will claim that the amount of the fraudulent purchase can be credited back if the individual divulges the three-digit number.

However, if the security code is revealed, the fraudster will use it to try and make fraudulent purchases over the telephone or internet using the victim's card details.

"You should never disclose any personal financial information to someone who has cold-called you over the phone – wherever they claim to be from," said Mark Bowerman, PR manager at APACS.

"If you have any doubts when approached in this way you should hang up and call the organisation back on a number that you know is correct. If you think you have already been a victim of this scam, you should speak to your card company as soon as possible."

As well as keeping your card details safe and secure, there are a number of other common sense steps that individuals can follow to help minimise the chances of being a victim of fraud. APACS's advice to consumers is:

- Don't let your cards or your card details out of your sight when making a transaction.
- Destroy, preferably shred, any documents or receipts that contain personal financial information when you dispose of them.

- Register your cards with *Verified by Visa* or *MasterCard SecureCode*.
- Do not keep your passwords, login details and PINs written down.
- Do not disclose PINs, login details or passwords in response to unsolicited emails or telephone callers claiming to be from your bank, the card schemes or the police.
- When entering your PIN in a shop or a cash machine use your free hand to shield the number from prying eyes or hidden cameras.
- Only divulge your card details in a telephone transaction when you have instigated the call and are familiar with the company.
- Make sure your computer has up-to-date anti-virus software and a firewall installed and switched on.
- Access internet banking or shopping sites by typing the address into your browser. Never go to a website from a link in an email and then enter personal details.
- Shop at secure websites by ensuring that the security icon (locked padlock or unbroken key symbol) is showing in your browser window.
- Always log out after shopping and save the confirmation email as a record of your purchase.

More information for consumers about fraud prevention is available in a *Personal Security Plan* advice guide – available to download from the publications section of the APACS website: [www.apacs.org.uk](http://www.apacs.org.uk).

**For further information contact:**  
**APACS Press Office on 020 7711 6251**  
or [press@apacs.org.uk](mailto:press@apacs.org.uk).

## **e-update 7: Sent 05.03.09**

### **POST OFFICE OVERCHARGING**

During a recent check on postal charges throughout Scotland it was found that Renfrewshire Post Offices overcharged on 7 out of 10 items posted by our lead officer on this project.

Full details can be found on our website: [Post Office overcharging](#)

### **COST OF SERVICE COMPARISON**

Renfrewshire Council's Trading Standards Service was seventh most cost-efficient of Scotland's 32 local authorities in 2007-08. For Scottish councils, the average cost was £6.77 per resident, while Renfrewshire was 34.5% more efficient at £4.43 per resident.

Full details can be found on our website: [Cost of service comparison](#)

## FAKE FREE RENFREWSHIRE

Renfrewshire Council's Trading Standards Service are launching a "Fake Free Renfrewshire" initiative, and are looking for information from members of the public and businesses in relation to counterfeit goods such as clothing, tobacco, jewellery, music and film disks or games.

Such information has been instrumental in a number of recently successful cases, such as:

- A Paisley man is currently serving 1 year in prison for selling Nike trainers over eBay after Renfrewshire Trading Standards received a tip-off from a business.
- Enforcement action was taken against a Johnstone trader for selling counterfeit cigarettes after information was received from a member of the public.
- A Glasgow man was fined £10,000 for selling counterfeit clothing after a member of the public complained about the poor quality item he had purchased

Counterfeiting affects legitimate businesses and can cause price increases in genuine items, and job losses from manufacturing through to the retail sector. Counterfeit goods are poor quality, a waste of money and in some cases, unsafe. Counterfeit cigarettes expose consumers to health risks beyond that of authentic cigarettes as there are no controls governing their content. Don't get caught out!

If you have any information regarding the sale of counterfeit goods please report this, anonymously if you wish, on 0141 840 3146.

Remember: **COUNTERFEITERS ARE JOB DECREASERS**

**e-update 8:** Sent 09.03.09

## URGENT PRODUCT RECALL

Beko / Glen Dimplex Gas Grills and Cookers

**DANGER: CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING - RISK OF DEATH**

**Product name:** NEW WORLD & BELLING Gas Grill and Cooker - GLEN DIMPLEX. LEISURE ALTA & FLAVEL Gas Grill and Cooker - BEKO PLC.

**Brand:** BEKO / GLEN DIMPLEX

**Price:** Around £300-£400

**Country of origin:** Turkey

**Description:** Items are all double cavity gas cookers (separate Gas Grill and Cooker)



**Belling G755**  
**White(50531081) &**  
**Anthracite(50531082)**  
**Belling GT755**  
**White(444449050)**



**Belling Country Chef 100G**  
**Anthracite(444445946) &**  
**Silver(444445945)**



**New World Vision 50TWLM**  
**Silver(444445698) &**  
**White(444445697)**  
**New World Vision 50WLM**  
**Silver(444445020) &**  
**White(444445021)**

Several separate reports have been written which confirms that in 4 separate incidents, (one in Ireland and three in the UK) there have been 6 fatalities. The

coroner's inquests are live at present so it has been somewhat difficult to get the actual reports being used in the inquests. There were however, confirmed reports on each occasion which showed that the grill on the cookers found in the homes of the deceased were found to give off dangerous levels of CO when operated with the doors closed. No independent test reports are available as all items had been modified at time of notification. The risk within the cookers is not being questioned by the business and it is present in every cooker.

There have been 4 incidents. However it is important to stress that there have been no conclusions from the coroners as to the actual causes of death. The similarities between each incident are as follows;

1. Fatalities are due to CO poisoning.
2. All gas grills were found 'on' in the premises when the fatalities were discovered, and the grill doors were closed.
3. All ovens involved are manufactured by Arcelik.
4. Expert reports from the scenes show that the CO build up of the grills are negligible when the grill doors are open and increase rapidly within a short space of time when closed.
5. Levels of CO in the air during testing with the grill doors closed are shown to rapidly build up to lethal levels.
6. All ovens involved carry the 'O' seal.
7. Each expert report identifies the cooker as the sole contributor to CO build up in the property.
8. All cookers were installed correctly and were within the environments recommended by the manufacturer.

## MEASURES ADOPTED

BEKO and Glen Dimplex are to carry out modification to all affected stock and to carry out modification work to all affected models in the field (those purchased by customers). This modification has been proven to remove the risk of CO poisoning.

<https://secure.tslinonline.co.uk/images/documents/249410/modification-cookers.pdf>

All UK and Ireland stock has been modified. All shop store stock has been suspended and modifications to these cookers are currently taking place. All new stock coming out of the factory in Turkey has been modified. All UK stock held by the two businesses has been modified. Both businesses have contacted all their customers to populate a database of consumers who have purchased their product. Direct contact will be made to all customers on the database to arrange modification and to ensure that they know how to safely use their cooker in the mean time. A national

press campaign will be carried out in the hope to target those customers not on the database. This will go out as soon as the business has been able to establish the infrastructure necessary to cope with an operation of this scale. This is likely to be within the next 5 days.

**PLEASE VISIT THE [BEKO](#) WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS IF YOU, OR ANYONE YOU KNOW, HAS PURCHASED ONE OF THESE COOKERS.**

**e-update 9:** Sent 21.05.09

### **FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET & HOME SAFETY TEST**

Renfrewshire Council and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are calling on anyone age 55 or over, or with a disability, who lives or works in Renfrewshire to take up their free electric blanket safety check. Trading Standards and Fire and Rescue staff are urging people to get their blankets checked before they reuse them next autumn. Those eligible have until 31 August 2009 to contact Trading Standards. Blankets may be dropped off at Renfrewshire House for testing or, if this is not possible, Officers can arrange to check the blankets during a home visit.

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue are also offering **free Home Fire Safety checks** where they can identify any potential fire hazards within your home and provide advice on how to best reduce the risk of fires. They can also supply and install a **free smoke alarm** if necessary.

**Please contact Nicola Williamson on 0141 840 3183**

### **CHEAP MOBILE PHONE CHARGERS**

Buckinghamshire Trading Standards have produced a video which warns of the true cost of buying cheap mobile phone chargers.

<http://www.stantonmedia.tv/tradingstandards/truecost.html>

### **COLD CALL CONTROL ZONES**

It's that time of year again when workmen appear at your door offering to do work at knock-down prices. Some of these traders may well be genuine; however, often they are not. Every year we receive complaints from people who have been misled or ripped-off by uninvited 'cold' callers at their door. Our [website](#) offers advice about how to prevent this from happening to you.

If you would like a free sticker for your front door which advises salesmen that your home does not welcome cold

callers, please contact us with your postal address.

### **UNDERAGE CIGARETTE SALES - TEST PURCHASING**

Under new legislation, it is now an offence to sell cigarettes, tobacco products or cigarette papers to anyone under 18, even if they look older. This applies whether or not the cigarettes are for the young person's own use. It is also an offence to sell cigarettes unless they are in quantities of 10 or more and in their original packaging. This means that packets of cigarettes cannot be split to be sold as singles.

Renfrewshire Trading Standards regularly carry out test purchases using underage volunteers in order to detect shops that are selling cigarettes illegally. If you know of any shop breaking the law in this manner, or if you know of anyone under the age of 16 who may be willing to volunteer to become a test purchaser, then please contact us in confidence.

**e-update 10:** Sent 15.06.09

### **CHECKING UP ON CHECKING-IN**

Renfrewshire Council's trading standards officers are checking up on airport check-in desks in the run up to the holiday season to reassure travellers that baggage scales are accurate.

For further information, visit our [website](#).

### **IMPORTANT SAFETY RECALLS**

**Laptop battery: HP recalls Notebook Computer Batteries due to fire hazard**  
Hewlett Packard have announced a worldwide voluntary recall and replacement programme for battery packs used in certain HP notebook PC's. HP customers with a battery pack affected by this programme will be eligible to receive a replacement battery pack for each verified and recalled battery pack at no cost.

Visit [Hewlett Packard's](#) website for full information.

**Car roof rack: Thule recalls Rapid Fixpoint XT fit kit produced during the period from 1 January 2008 until 28 February 2009**

Thule supplies load carrier solutions for over 100 new vehicles, covering a total number of over 1500 car models on a global scale. Recently they learned that a series of their fit kits are not safe enough for usage as an included bolt does not deliver the required hardness. Due to the serious safety risk for consumers Thule has initiated an immediate product recall.

Visit [Thule's](#) website for full information.

**Children's socks: Baby Elle socks 5pk - Colour: white & pink - shoe sizes: 0-2 ½ & 3-5 ½**

It has been identified that there may be a potential safety hazard with the above baby girls and boys socks in all sizes. It has been brought to our attention that the cotton threads inside the socks have not been cut correctly and so do not meet safety standards. Customers who have purchased this product (or received this product as a gift) are therefore requested to return it to any one of Mackay's stores for a full refund.

Only the styles with the reference numbers **32/05/991** and **32/05/959** are affected. The reference number can be found on the back of the packaging above the barcode. If you are unsure if the product you have purchased is affected by this safety notice, please ask staff in any Mackay's stores or contact the Quality Control Manager at: MACKAYS STORES LIMITED, Caledonia House, 5 Inchinnan Drive, Inchinnan, Renfrew, PA4 9AF. Tel: 0141 812 9406

### **'GAS SAFETY REGISTER' REPLACES 'CORGI'**

The CORGI gas registration scheme in Great Britain and the Isle of Man ended on 31 March 2009. It is no longer recognised by law as the gas safety register.

As of 1st April 2009, to carry out work on gas installations and appliances safely and legally, engineers in Great Britain and the Isle of Man must be on the [Gas Safe Register](#).

The Gas Safe Register exists to protect you, your family, and your property from dangerous gas work. Incorrectly fitted, badly repaired or poorly maintained gas appliances are a major cause of lethal [carbon monoxide \(CO\) poisoning](#), and can also lead to gas leaks and explosions.

Anyone carrying out work on gas must be registered with Gas Safe Register. If not, they are breaking the law and putting you and your family at risk. Only a [Gas Safe registered engineer](#) is legally allowed to install gas appliances, boilers, hobs, ovens or fires in your home or workplace. You must only use a Gas Safe registered engineer for any type of gas work, including installation, maintenance and servicing.

## e-update 11: Sent 09.09.09

### UNDERAGE SALES - TIP-OFF SUCCESS

A tip-off was received from an e-update subscriber advising us of a shop that was allegedly selling cigarettes to under 18's. This was investigated and a test purchase was carried out. The shop in question sold to our underage volunteer and a warning letter was issued. A follow up test purchase will be made in the future, and if the shop sells again a report shall be made to the Procurator Fiscal. Thank you for your co-operation and your support in our bid to rid Renfrewshire of underage sales.

If you have any information that you feel may be of use to us, please report it using the details at the bottom of this e-mail.

### NEWS

More than half of websites selling electronic goods were breaking European laws aimed at protecting consumers, according to an EU investigation. The analysis of 369 websites selling mobiles, DVD players and games consoles in 28 European countries found that 203 of them held misleading information. Of the 203 cases facing further investigation:

- Two-thirds (66%) failed to adequately explain that consumers had seven days to return a product bought over distance for a full refund and without giving a reason. Others failed to explain the right to have a faulty product repaired or replaced for at least two years after sale.
- Details about extra delivery charges were missing or difficult to find on the website in 45% of cases.
- A third (33%) did not fully outline the trader's name, address or email details so they could not be contacted if there was a problem.

For full details of this investigation, visit the [BBC](#) website.

### FAKE FREE RENFREWSHIRE

Please find attached a new leaflet which has been produced by Renfrewshire Trading Standards to promote our campaign: 'Fake Free Renfrewshire'.

### IMPORTANT SAFETY RECALLS

For the latest product safety recalls please visit [Trading Standards Institute](#)

## e-update 12: Sent 20.11.09

### NEW AND IMPROVED WEBPAGES

Renfrewshire Trading Standards are pleased to announce that we have recently added more content to our website. This new information will be helpful to Renfrewshire Consumer's who wish to brush up on their consumer rights, especially in the run up to Christmas. New pages added include: Christmas Safety Tips, Buying a Used Car Advice, Internet Shopping Assistance, Consumer Statutory Rights, Package Holiday Advice, Ripped Off - Then Tip Off, Top Tips for Buying on Credit, Top Tips for Buying a Car and Trading Standards Frequently Asked Questions. You can access all these pages [here](#), or use the individual links below.

More pages will be added in the future and we'll keep you updated right here as soon as it happens.

### WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTIONS (A message from our colleagues in the Environmental Services Department)

As you may know, there have been recent changes to the Council's waste and recycling collection services. If you have been given a new blue recycling bin, the day that your bin is collected may have changed. It's important that you put out the right bin on the right day, so please check your collection calendar or go to [renfrewshire.gov.uk/recycling](http://renfrewshire.gov.uk/recycling) for more information.

Thanks for helping us to recycle more.

### IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICES AND RECALLS

**MacLaren Baby Pushchairs** - Recall Notice issued for free safety kit to be added. Further information is available from the [Which](#) website.

**Poundland - Children's Halloween Masks** - unacceptable levels of chemicals that are classified as unsafe for young children has been discovered.

For a full list of the most recent safety recalls, visit the [Trading Standards Institute](#) website.

### RECENT SCAM WARNINGS

**Money Transfer Scam:** The Ministry of Justice is warning consumers of the danger of sending money out of the country by money transfer to businesses offering claims management services. The types of service involved seem to be those that offer consumers help to claim

back: Unfair bank charges ; Unfair credit card charges; Premiums for mis-sold payment protection insurance (PPI). A number of businesses charge an up-front fee for these services. Some businesses use call centres, often overseas, to identify potential customers. However we are not aware of any authorised business that takes fees by requesting money transfers to go overseas. If consumers want to check out a business before they pay for a service they can contact the [Ministry of Justice's Monitoring & Compliance Unit](#) on 0845 4506858 or 01283 233309.

**B.I.N. Scam:** Scammers can easily access the Bank Identification Numbers (BIN) on your credit and debit cards. It's a simple step from there to trick people into revealing more details. Visit the [Safe from Scams](#) website for full details.

**Bogus Gas Fitter:** Paisley Daily Express reported on a bogus gas fitter operating in Renfrewshire. For the full article, visit the [Paisley Daily Express](#) website.

### COMING SOON

**Advice Workshop:** Renfrewshire Trading Standards will be holding a consumer rights/Christmas safety advice surgery in the WRVS shop at Causeyside Street, Paisley on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November, from 12.30pm till 2.30pm.

**YouTube/Facebook:** Renfrewshire Trading Standards are currently investigating the possible use of YouTube and Facebook to get our message out to Renfrewshire Consumers. Further details will follow soon.

## e-update 13: Sent 17.12.09

### "HIS CHURCH" DONATION FROM TRADING STANDARDS

Renfrewshire Trading Standards launched a local Christmas Campaign on 11<sup>th</sup> December to promote the message that counterfeiting is not a victimless crime, and to appeal for information from the public about people selling counterfeit goods. Recent successes include Operation Timberwolf where we recovered almost **£1,000,000** in counterfeit clothing and accessories; and Operation Angel where we recovered **£250,000** in counterfeit Nike trainers. Jail sentences and hefty fines have been obtained for the offenders, and Proceeds of Crime legislation has been utilised to strip them of their ill-gotten gains.

Over £1,000,000 worth of counterfeit clothing, footwear and accessories were donated to the charity "His Church", witnessed by Local Councillor, Marie McGurk, representatives from Environmental Services and members

from our partner agencies. His Church take donations of counterfeit brand name clothing and accessories and recycle them by replacing the trade marks and re-branding the items. These items are then given to worthy causes within the UK in the first instance, and also abroad. The partnership with His Church also saw **food parcels and clothing worth £27,000 being distributed to 25 homeless projects across Paisley, Renfrew and Glasgow.** The Paisley based Homeseekers project, and the Christian Growth Centre were beneficiaries.

We want to use this opportunity to appeal for information from the public on sellers of counterfeit goods, and to spread the message that counterfeiting is not a victimless crime. Working in partnership with other agencies such as the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency we want to spread the message that "Fakes Fund Crime". If you have any information on the sale of counterfeit goods please call 0141 840 3146 or [e-mail](#) in confidence.

This success story was report on [STV News](#), the [BBC](#), the [Paisley Daily Express](#) and the [Evening Times](#).

## CHRISTMAS SCAM WARNINGS

**Delivery Card Scam:** If you receive a delivery card through your letterbox which you do not believe is genuine and which asks you to dial a premium rate number, you can contact [PhonePay Plus](#) (the premium rate service regulator) on 0800 500 212 (Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm) for further guidance.

**Bogus Christmas eCard notification:** emails are being sent out to distribute malware. Emails claim that the recipient has been sent an eCard from a "dear friend". The user is instructed to click a link to view the eCard. Clicking the link installs malware that can give the attacker access to the compromised computer. It can also install other malware that can then turn the computer into a zombie that can be used to distribute spam without the knowledge of the user. Be very cautious of any eCard notification emails that you receive.

**Fake Invoices:** from Delivery Services to steal your money - if you didn't buy it, then you won't receive an alert about it. So be very wary of emails that seem to be receipts or delivery notifications for stuff you've supposed to have bought. Many ask you to quote credit card details or open the forms. Either can allow a virus or Trojan Horse into your computer to steal your personal information.

**Christmas Carol Lyrics:** can be dangerous - bogus websites are often set up to cash-in on popular searches. So just because you don't know the words to Silent Night or want a Jingle Bells ringtone, it doesn't mean the website offering either via a search engine will be safe. It can lead to adware, spyware and other potentially unwanted programs being installed.

**Charity Phishing Scams:** hackers take advantage of people's generosity, especially at Christmas, by sending e-mails that appear to be from legitimate charitable organisations. In reality, they are linked to fake websites designed to steal donations, credit card information and the identities of donors.

## "FREE" HOME SECURITY ALARM OFFERS

It has been brought to the attention of Trading Standards services throughout Scotland of certain companies offering 'free alarm systems' including 'free installation'.

The initial sales pitch may include claims that there have been a lot of burglaries in the local area and that the alarm systems are part of a free Government scheme for the elderly. This is simply a trick to get a foot in the door. There is **no government scheme offering free burglar alarms** to the elderly.

They will also say that you are more likely to be burgled without an alarm system. This particular statement is, of course, true. But, should you decide to have an alarm system installed in your property, shop around.

Do not sign up from a cold call, or make a snap decision in your home from a salesman's visit. Always ask for a few days to think about the offer. If you are told that the offer is only available for that day, **your own 'alarm bells' should be ringing!** These 'free' alarm system come complete with a very high monthly maintenance charge, which over the term of the contract you sign, is usually far more than what you need to pay for a decent alarm system.

Please inform your elderly relatives and friends of this message, as they are particularly vulnerable to this kind of selling tactic.

See our [press release](#) on our website for further details.

## YOUTUBE CHANNEL

You can now see a collection of consumer advice and safety videos collected on our [YouTube channel](#). Why not subscribe to our channel and you will

automatically get notified of any new videos we add.

## COMING SOON

Renfrewshire Trading Standards are making available consumer rights/Christmas safety leaflets in the Paisley Centre from 17th December.

## e-update 14: Sent 29.01.10

## ROUGE TRADERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FROZEN PIPES

The Trading Standards Institute (TSI) is urging residents to beware of rogues offering to check the house for frozen pipes. Trading standards services have received reports of vulnerable consumers being visited by criminals claiming to be from a water company. Once they've gained access into the home the householder is distracted in the kitchen or bathroom while the burglars make away with valuables. We are urging consumers to be vigilant with any trader turning up on their doorstep uninvited – should they need repairs or checks carried out we'd advise them to call their water supplier and arrange for an engineer to visit by appointment. Consumers are also advised to check schemes such as Trustmark and Buy with Confidence to find a reputable trader for repairs.

Other tips to avoid falling victim to rogues include:

- use a trader recommended by friends or family;
- get three quotes;
- do not use a trader who just turns up on your doorstep or leaves a leaflet; they could be anyone.

Should anyone have doubts about the credentials of a trader knocking on their door they should take up as many details as they can, including the registration number on the vehicle, and report them to trading standards service or the Police.

## COUNCIL TAX REFUND SCAM

People in Renfrewshire are being warned about a telephone scam designed to find out their bank details so that criminals can empty their accounts. Renfrewshire Council issued the warning after a number of people reported receiving suspicious calls, allegedly from the council's Contact Centre. The caller tells the person that they are due a refund on their council tax and asks for the person's bank details so that the money can be paid into their account.

Councillor Allan Noon, Renfrewshire Council's Finance Spokesperson said, "The council would never phone a

customer and ask for their bank details. If a person is due a council tax refund then the money would be taken off their next bill. If the refund was bigger than the bill then we would send the person a cheque. No reputable organisation will ask a customer for their bank details. Any request for this information should always be treated as suspicious."

### SCAMNESTY MONTH

Consumer Direct are running 'Scamnesty' which will take place from 1-26 February 2010. During Scamnesty month Scamnesty bins will be placed around Renfrewshire in public places, including Renfrewshire House Customer Contact Centre and Advice Works in Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone so you can bin those pesky scam letters you have received in the post. As well as letters and mailers some scammers send emails, text messages or even call you at your home. Now you can report these phone calls and forward your suspected scam emails and websites to [consumerdirect.gov.uk/scamnesty](http://consumerdirect.gov.uk/scamnesty) from 1st February and help us to beat the scammers!

### PAISLEY TRADER FINED £2,000 FOR SELLING CIGARETTES TO UNDERAGE

Renfrewshire Trading Standards ongoing test purchasing scheme, whereby underage volunteers attempt to buy cigarettes from local shops, had a huge success this month. A trader was caught by our team and a report was sent to the Procurator Fiscal. The trader decided to plead not guilty to selling to our volunteer and went to trial. The judge threw out his not guilty plea and fined him a Scottish record of £2,000. For further details, please read the following articles: [BBC News Website](#) - [The Daily Record](#) - [Paisley Daily Express](#)

### BREAKING NEWS

**The Scottish Government passed a bill on Wednesday banning the display of cigarettes in shops, outlawing vending machines, introducing fixed penalty fines for sales to under 18's and introducing a registration scheme for the sale of tobacco. The bill will come into force for large retailers in 2011 and 2013 for smaller retailers. Visit the [BBC website](#) for further information.**

### 'AUTOWORLD' CLOSURE LEAVES CUSTOMERS IN THE LURCH

Paisley firm, Autoworld of 24-26 Old Sneddon Street has closed down, leaving many consumers out of pocket. It also left unresolved consumer complaints that Trading Standards had been trying to resolve. Renfrewshire Council are

currently considering taking legal action against the owners. Please read the [Daily Record story](#) for further details. If you had a consumer complaint against Autoworld, please contact us.

### UK TOP 5 CONSUMER COMPLAINTS OF 2009

1. Second hand cars
2. Televisions
3. Mobile phone service agreements
4. Mobile phones
5. Laptop's, notebooks and tablet PC's

### YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Remember, you can now see a collection of consumer advice and safety videos collected on our [YouTube channel](#). Why not subscribe to our channel and you will automatically get notified of any new videos we add.

### COMING SOON

We are currently investigating the possibility of setting up a Trusted Trader Scheme for Renfrewshire traders. Further details to follow after a thorough investigation into the pros and cons has been carried out.

**e-update 15: Sent 26.04.10**

### ADVICE TO TRAVELLERS: ICELAND VOLCANO FLIGHT DELAYS

The recent volcano eruption in Iceland has caused many travellers flights and package holidays to be delayed or cancelled. The Renfrewshire Council [website](#) will publish a press release within the next few days advising consumers who have been affected of their rights.

### GLASGOW AIRPORT BAGGAGE WEIGHERS'

Renfrewshire Trading Standards officers recently checked all of Glasgow Airport's baggage weighing machines. Each weighing machine now displays a 'Trading Standards Checked' sticker to ensure the public that it was correct when inspected by us.

### DANGEROUS HALLOWEEN MASKS - PROSECUTION

Renfrewshire Trading Standards were involved in an operation which led to West Dunbartonshire Trading Standards prosecuting Poundland for selling unsafe Halloween masks. The masks were found to contain a higher than permitted level of [phthalates](#), chemicals which have caused concerns on health grounds, breaching EEC regulations. Poundland were fined £7,500.

### FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING

We are once again offering free electric blanket testing to persons with a disability, and to people of age 55 or over who are resident, or work in Renfrewshire. The service includes free uplift and return of blankets. See our [website](#) for further details.

### SCOTTISH POWER SCAM

A Renfrewshire consumer received an unsolicited telephone call from an Indian call centre. The salesman claimed he was calling on behalf of Scottish Power. He then asked for her electricity meter reading and her bank account details in order to take a payment. We have spoken to Scottish Power who have confirmed that this is a scam phone call. Please be vigilant when receiving calls like these and advise any friends or family about this scam.

### WEBSITE SURVEY

We have recently improved our website by increasing the content available to Renfrewshire consumers and traders. You can have your say on what you want to see by taking our short [survey](#).

**e-update 16: Sent 21.07.10**

### TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we will publish our figures showing what services we have carried for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for April - June 2010:

#### Consumer complaints: 297

*Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.*

#### Business advice requests from traders: 105

*We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.*

#### Reported scams: 17

*We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.*

#### Counterfeiting complaints: 5

*Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.*

#### Test purchasing of age restricted products: 4

*Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops*

in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.

### **Programmed routine business premises visits: 180**

Every shop in Renfrewshire is inspected by us over a two year period to ensure that they are complying with current trading laws and regulations.

### **GOLDTRAIL TRAVEL LTD: COLLAPSE OF HOLIDAY COMPANY**

The above company ceased trading last week leaving a lot of customers abroad needing flights to get back home and also customers who have paid bookings and not had their holidays. If you, or anyone you know, requires further information on how to claim your money back, please visit the [Civil Aviation Authority website](#) for further details.

### **PETROLEUM PROJECT: AUTHORISED CONTAINERS**

Two years ago 2 people died and one was serious injured in an explosion caused by petrol being sold and stored in an unauthorised container. Legislation and licence conditions prohibit the sale of petroleum into an unauthorised container. A project was carried out to make sure Renfrewshire petrol stations were complying with their licence conditions. 10 petrol stations were visited which resulted in a 100% failure. All stations sold petrol into a container obscured from view, therefore it could not be established if the container was approved. A warning letter was sent to the licence holders and a further re-visit will be carried in the future to ensure compliance.

### **UNSAFE LASER POINTERS PROJECT**

Renfrewshire Trading Standards and Strathclyde Police have received complaints regarding the anti-social use of laser products, in some instances, when lasers were pointed at commercial aircraft and Police helicopters.

Trading Standards Officers purchased an array of products containing lasers in shops across Renfrewshire. The products included laser pointers and pens, but they have also been found as laser sights attached to child appealing pellet guns.

The project found that 80% of the laser products purchased were strong enough to be considered unsuitable for sale to the public. Trading Standards would urge any consumer who sees laser pens or 'BB guns' with laser sights on sale in their local shops to contact Nick Gray on 0141 840 3528.

### **FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET TESTING**

During May and June we carried out free electric blanket testing to persons with a disability, and to people aged 55 or over who are resident or work in Renfrewshire. 43 electric blankets were tested and, of these, 14 failed our safety tests and were destroyed. This equates to of 32% of electric blankets tested being unsafe in Renfrewshire. If you want further advice on how to check if your blanket is safe, please visit our [webpage](#).

### **BLIND CORD SAFETY**

Window blind cords and chains can pose a risk for babies, children and vulnerable people who could injure or even strangle themselves on the hanging looped cords. Renfrewshire Trading Standards have published a [new webpage](#) giving guidance on how to avoid the risks.

## **e-update 17: Sent 21.09.10**

### **NATIONAL e-CONSUMER WEEK**

The Trading Standards Institute (TSI) have launched National e-Consumer Week, running from 20 to 24 September. TSI promotes National e-Consumer Week to raise consumers' awareness of a range of issues that impact on their daily lives. The theme of the event this year is online shopping. The message is Be Safe Online – beware of fake sites and fake products. You can view their promotional materials on the [TSI](#) website.

- Renfrewshire Trading Standards are holding a National e-Consumer Week display in Renfrewshire House next to the Atrium Cafe until Thursday 23 September.

### **LATEST SCAM WARNINGS**

**HMRC tax rebate email scam** - Following the recent announcement by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) that approximately 4.3 million people are due a rebate, there has been an increase in scam emails claiming to be from HMRC. HMRC have advised that they will NEVER send an email or telephone people to advise they are entitled to a tax rebate. If you have received an email claiming to be from HMRC, do not click on any links or telephone any numbers given. Instead forward the email to [phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk) and then delete it. Further details can be found on [HMRC website](#).

**Sky insurance scam** - Sky (BSkyB) customers are receiving cold calls offering insurance on their set top boxes by salespeople claiming to represent Sky TV. Sky TV have advised that they would

not cold call to sell insurance on their set top boxes. If you believe you have been caught out, please report it to [Consumer Direct](#) or to the [Action Fraud](#) website.

**Copycat websites** - Computer experts warn that setting up copycat websites takes only a few seconds. Some are so sophisticated that they have added counterfeit security to trick people into thinking that they are legitimate sites. For more information and advice on how to avoid these sites, visit the [BBC](#) website.

**Free puppy scam** - This is a scam offering pedigree puppies (and also expensive birds like African Grey Parrots) at very low prices. The seller will always be some distance from you and will offer to have the puppy delivered to you by a pet courier company – your only 'cost' will be paying for the courier. This will most likely be a scam and you will never receive your 'free' puppy. For more information, visit the [Kennels](#) website.

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud](#) website.

### **UNSAFE SKY LANTERNS REPORT**

A report in to the use of sky lanterns (also Chinese lanterns), has found that they are causing harm to farmers livestock and that they are also a fire hazard. The lanterns have become very popular at weddings and parties, but consumers should be aware of the dangers that they pose. For more information on this report, please visit the [BBC](#) website.

### **NEW WEBPAGES ADDED**

We have added 4 new webpages since our last e-update. Two consumer advice pages: [Charitable Collections Advice](#) and [Parking Fines Advice](#); and two business advice pages: [Petrol Licence Holder Register](#) and [Sale of Goods Act Hub](#).

## **e-update 18: Sent 29.11.10**

### **FAKE FREE RENFREWSHIRE LAUNCH**

Counterfeiters and copyright crooks are being targeted by a new partnership between Crimestoppers and Trading Standards.

The Scotland Crimestoppers campaign, which urges people to call anonymously with information on those who are involved in the production and sale of fake goods, was launched on Monday 15 November alongside the launch of Renfrewshire Council's "Fake Free Renfrewshire" Strategy. This successful launch was reported in the [Evening](#)

[Times](#) and [Paisley Daily Express](#) and also on the [STV](#) and [WiredNews](#) websites.

## LATEST SCAM WARNINGS

**Fake PC Virus Scam** - You may receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from Microsoft or from your Internet Service Provider, advising that you have a serious virus on your computer. The scam tricks people into paying for a remote fix to the 'virus', and also allows the scammers access to all the data on your PC. Please read this article for more details.

### Fake Electricity Top-up Card -

Criminals have managed to clone prepayment utility meters, allowing them to offer fake top-up cards for cut prices. These cards will initially give credit, but will not register with the electricity companies, who will then demand payment. People being caught out end up paying twice for their utility. For more details, read the BBC story on this subject.

**VAT Increase Scam** - VAT increases from 17.5% to 20% in January. The Trading Standards Institute are warning consumers of companies that offer 'buy now, save on the VAT increase'. Please read the full story on the TSI website.

**12 Scams of Christmas** - Security company McAfee have published it's annual list of 12 online scams that consumers should be aware of this Christmas (reported on the Action Fraud website).

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud](#) website.

## CONSUMER RIGHTS AT CHRISTMAS - RETURNING GIFTS

If you buy a present for someone this Christmas that needs to be returned or exchanged, please see this article for guidance on your rights.

## WHICH? MAGAZINE IPHONE APP

Consumer magazine Which? have launched a free consumer rights iPhone app. Visit their [website](#) for further details.

## NEW TOBACCO REGULATIONS

Scottish Government: The Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act regulations, published last week, introduce new rules for selling cigarettes. Retailers risk committing an offence unless they verify, using an approved proof of age method, that someone is not

underage. Fixed penalty fines will be introduced for those who get caught selling to someone underage. These new rules come in to effect on 1 April 2011.

## POUNDLAND RECALL - HALLOWEEN CLAW

After an investigation by Renfrewshire Trading Standards Officers, Poundland recalled their Halloween Claw from all their stores around the UK.

## TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we publish our figures showing what services we have carried for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for 1 July to 30 September, 2010:

### Consumer complaints: 305 (+8 from last quarter)

*Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.*

### Business advice requests from traders: 105 (+12)

*We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.*

### Reported scams: 15 (-2)

*We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.*

### Counterfeiting complaints: 6 (+1)

*Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.*

### Test purchasing of age restricted products: 18 (+14)

*Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.*

### Programmed routine business premises visits: 234 (+54)

*Every shop in Renfrewshire is inspected by us over a two year period to ensure that they are complying with current trading laws and regulations.*

**e-update 19: Sent 21.02.11**

## LAUNCH OF RENFREWSHIRE TRUSTED TRADER SCHEME

Renfrewshire Council Trading Standards are launching a **Trusted Trader Scheme** in April 2011. To date, invitations have been sent out to local home improvement companies such as builders, joiners, plumbers etc. Companies who decide to

sign up shall be audited by Trading Standards and will also sign up to our Code of Practice. After this process, Renfrewshire consumers will be encouraged to consider using a Trusted Trader from our vetted list. This should encourage better practice from traders and give more confidence to consumers when choosing a trader. Other trades and services will be invited to join in the future. For an example of how the Renfrewshire scheme will work, please visit [Dundee Trading Standards Trusted Trader](#) website.

## BOGUS WORKMEN WARNING TO RENFREWSHIRE RESIDENTS

Over the last few weeks two separate incidents have taken place in Renfrewshire involving bogus workmen. Consumers should be on their guard, particularly those in vulnerable groups.

- The first incident involved an 87 year old pensioner who was robbed of his life savings by 3 bogus workmen who claimed they wanted to check his water, as reported on the [BBC website](#).
- The second case involved another pensioner who received a cold call from 2 unknown men offering to carry out work on his roof. Over a period of 2 weeks they persuaded him to withdraw thousands of pounds for works that were never carried out. The men were driving an unmarked white van, the registration number of which was not discovered, and only offered a mobile phone number as contact.
- Another similar incident recently took place in Dunfermline, as reported on the [Action Fraud website](#).

These unfortunate cases highlight the dangers of engaging with cold callers and bogus workmen. For guidance on how to deal with suspected bogus callers, please visit our [website](#).

**\* One of the key aims of our Trusted Trader Scheme is to reduce incidents like these by giving consumers access to a choice of reputable traders in the Renfrewshire area. \***

## TRADER IN COURT OVER FRAUD ALLEGATIONS

The [Greenock Telegraph](#) have reported on court proceedings which have begun against a former Renfrewshire trader, Mr Frank Thirwell, who runs Galaxy Gas Service. The allegations of fraud relate to the use of the CORGI logo (now Gas Safe Register) by Galaxy Gas in order to illegally carry out gas related works whilst unregistered. The case continues on 5 April 2011.

## LATEST SCAM WARNINGS

**Counterfeit wine** - A recent report carried out in England suggests that thousands of bottles of fake wine may be on sale in off-licences throughout the UK. Please visit the [BBC website](#) to get tips on how to spot a fake bottle of wine.

**DVLA scam e-mail** - Fake DVLA e-mails are being sent out to the public asking drivers to verify their driving licence details. This is an identity theft scam. See the [DVLA website](#) for further details.

**Scam phone call warning** - Beware of telephone scammers claiming to be from the government, the Office of Fair Trading, a high street bank or a legitimate claims management company. They have been targeting consumers, suggesting they are eligible to receive payments (e.g. bank charge refund). These callers have no connection with Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) or any other government organisation.

**Psychic scam** - 'Psychics' are contacting people advising that an angel is warning that something terrible is going to happen to them. The 'psychic' then offers to resolve this problem for a fee. This is a scam. If you are contacted with a story like this, or similar, please report it to us.

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud website](#).

## PRODUCT SAFETY RECALL

### [Living Aquarium Light-up Fish Tank](#)

Item codes: 074/319, 074/324, NSP/010 - Bar codes: 5022896743194, 5022896743248, 5050565130013

An electrical fault has been identified with the Living Aquarium Light-up Fish Tank. If you have bought this item during 2010, **do not use it, do not plug your purchase into the mains supply**. Return it immediately to the store of purchase for a full refund. For further information regarding this recall, please contact PMS International on 01268-503322 between 9am and 5:30pm Monday to Friday.

For a list of up to date product recalls, please visit the [Trading Standards Institute website](#).

## TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we publish our figures showing what services we have carried for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for 1 October to 31 December, 2010:

### **Consumer complaints: 299 (-6 from last quarter)**

*Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an*

*advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.*

### **Business advice requests from traders: 117 (+12)**

*We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.*

### **Reported scams: 16 (+1)**

*We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.*

### **Counterfeiting complaints: 4 (-2)**

*Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.*

### **Test purchasing of age restricted products: 28 (+10)**

*Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.*

### **Programmed routine business premises visits: 194 (-40)**

*Every shop in Renfrewshire is inspected by us over a two year period to ensure that they are complying with current trading laws and regulations.*

**e-update 20: Sent 19.05.11**

## NEW TOBACCO LEGISLATION - FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

New Tobacco legislation came into force on 1 April 2011. The following is a summary of some of the changes in the law that you should be aware of:

- **It is now an offence for under 18's to attempt to buy cigarettes.**
- **It is now an offence for a proxy or third party to buy for under 18's.**
- **Anyone wishing to sell tobacco products will have to be registered.**
- **Selling such products will be an offence if you have not registered, or if your registration has been cancelled.**
- **Fixed penalty notices will be issued on the spot to anyone caught breaching the legislation.**

## BRAND-I WEBSITE

The [Brand-i website](#) is a shopping directory that ONLY lists webstores selling genuine products. Use the directory to help you find popular designer/branded clothing, perfume, shoes, music, sunglasses, etc. You can trust the online stores listed as they have

been provided with the consent of the brands themselves. Brand-i is an independent directory, but is supported by the Trading Standards Institute, so you can trust it is a reliable source of information. You can also use Brand-i to report suspicious webstores by clicking on the Report a Site button.

## GLADE PLUG-IN HOAX ALERT

An old e-mail hoax has recently resurfaced which accuses Glade Plug-In air fresheners of starting a fire which caused substantial damage to a property. This is a confirmed hoax. A [statement](#) was released by SC Johnson, the manufacturers of Glade Plug-Ins in 2008 which clarifies their position.

## LAUNCH OF ONLINE COMPLAINT REPORTING FORM

Renfrewshire Trading Standards have launched a new online complaint reporting form. This form asks the relevant questions that are required to assist in resolving consumer complaints. It is hoped that the form will speed up the response time and resolve complaints faster. You can view the form on our [website](#).

## SCAM WARNINGS

**Music Festival Ticket Scam** - Tickets for some of the most popular summer festivals have gone on sale recently. The National Fraud Intelligence Bureau is alerting music lovers to the threat of online ticketing fraud.

**Japan Tsunami Appeal Scam** - The British Red Cross is warning people to watch out for fraudulent emails claiming to be raising money for the Japan Tsunami Appeal.

**Internet Explorer 6 Warning** - Internet Explorer 6 lacks advanced security features. Upgrading to a newer version of Internet Explorer can help internet users protect themselves from online threats such as malware and phishing.

**Sony PlayStation 3 Data Theft** - Sony PlayStation Network has discovered that certain user account information has been compromised.

**LizaMoon website virus** - Criminals have inserted malicious code into more than 500,000 web pages. The virus makes computer users think their machines are infected with multiple viruses.

**Bank Charge Reclaim Scam** - DO NOT send Ukash to anyone calling you and claiming to be able to reclaim bank charges for you. They will ask you to

send them a fee in the form of a Ukash voucher code by email or over the telephone. This is a fraud and you will lose your money.

**Fake PC Virus Scam - (Repeat of warning from e-update no.18)** You may receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from Microsoft, or from your Internet Service Provider, advising that you have a serious virus on your computer. The scam tricks people into paying for a remote fix to the 'virus', and also allows the scammers access to all the data on your PC.

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud website](#).

## PRODUCT SAFETY RECALLS

Product	Company	Reason
<a href="#">Felt Tip Pens</a>	Poundland	Choking hazard
<a href="#">Fan Heater</a>	Argos	Fire hazard
<a href="#">Little Angels Flip Top Cup</a>	Asda	Choking hazard
<a href="#">Blooma Moon Chair</a>	B&Q	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Emma's Garden Polka Dot Dress</a>	TK Maxx	Choking hazard
<a href="#">Forsta Coffee/Tea Maker</a>	Ikea	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Citroen Picasso C3</a>	Citroen	Safety hazard

Click on the product for more details.

For a list of up to date product recalls, please visit the [Trading Standards Institute website](#).

## TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we publish our figures showing what services we have carried for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for **1 January to 31 March, 2011**.

### Consumer complaints: 269 (-30 from last quarter)

Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.

### Business advice requests from traders: 62 (-55)

We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.

### Reported scams: 10 (-6)

We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.

### Counterfeiting complaints: 3 (-1)

Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.

### Test purchasing of age restricted products: 18 (-10)

Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.

### Programmed routine business premises visits: 145 (-49)

Every shop in Renfrewshire is inspected by us over a two year period to ensure that they are complying with current trading laws and regulations.

## e-update 21: Sent 05.07.11

### URGENT PRODUCT RECALL

#### FIRE RISK WARNING OVER 500,000 BEKO FRIDGE FREEZERS

It has been brought to our attention today that **Beko** have announced an **urgent product recall on over 500,000 frost free fridge freezers**.

Today's announcement comes over a year after the Fire Brigade formally alerted Beko in June 2010.

- Details of which products are affected can be found on the [Trading Standards Institute website](#).
- You can also read the story on the [BBC website](#), and hear a statement from Beko on the [BBC Radio 4 website](#).
- Anyone with concerns should contact Beko by calling their free phone number on **0800 009 4837** or visiting the [Beko website](#). <http://www.beko.co.uk/>
- Please pass this urgent product recall on to anyone you know who has a Beko fridge freezer.

## e-update 22: Sent 31.08.11

### LAUNCH OF TRADER CHECKLIST

Renfrewshire Trading Standards have launched a new trader checklist. This checklist asks relevant questions and offers suggestions to help you form a contract with a reliable trader. You can print off the form and make notes as you move through the selection process. You can find the form on our [website](#).

### GAS SAFETY WEEK: 12-18 SEPTEMBER

Gas Safety Week aims to raise awareness of gas safety and the importance of taking care of your gas appliances. Badly fitted and poorly serviced gas appliances can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a highly poisonous gas. You can't see it, taste it or smell it, but it can kill quickly with no warning. [Visit the Gas Safety website for further details](#).

### MUSIC, FILM AND TV ON THE INTERNET - WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Using illegal file-sharing programmes exposes users to the risk of unwelcome content such as viruses, pornography and violent images. File-sharing software can also compromise your privacy and security by opening up your computer and sharing what's stored on it with the outside world. [Childnet International](#) have published easy to follow guidance for parents on how to keep children safe and legal online.

### CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - TACKLING SCAMS SURVEY

The Citizens Advice Bureau is working with Trading Standards and other organisations to help beat scammers. To help them, they are asking you to answer their survey about scams that affect you, in the area where you live. The survey takes a couple of minutes to complete and your answers will be anonymous. **Take the [tackling scams survey](#).**

## SCAM WARNINGS

Click on the scam for more details.

Scam	Details
<a href="#">Debt Free Texts</a>	There has been a significant increase in the numbers of texts, emails and adverts from debt and claims management companies that misleadingly state they can take over liability for debts, write off debts or get compensation for accidents.
<a href="#">Foreign Lottery Mail</a>	There has been an increase in scam mail letters that claim you have won a substantial amount of money in a foreign lottery. These latest scam mail letters ask for a fee, typically of £20, to be sent to cover administration costs or taxes before the prize can be claimed.
<a href="#">Ryanair Recruitment</a>	Job seekers are being warned about an email scam that is trying to trick them into paying for visa applications in order to apply for a job with Ryanair.
<a href="#">Orange Competition</a>	Orange UK is warning everyone to watch out for messages from scammers pretending to be from the mobile phone company.
<a href="#">Olympics Cash Prize</a>	Watch out for emails purporting to be from the organisers of the London 2012 Olympics, claiming you have won a cash prize.
<a href="#">Sky TV Billing</a>	You may receive a call claiming to be from the Sky billing department advising that your subscription for the month hasn't been paid, and that unless you give your credit card details to be processed, your service will be suspended.
<a href="#">Fake PC Security</a>	<b>(Repeat of warning from e-update 18 &amp; 20)</b> You may receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from Microsoft, your Internet Service Provider, or another legitimate sounding company, advising that you have a serious virus on your computer. The scam tricks people into paying for a remote fix to the 'virus', and also allows the scammers access to all the data on your PC.

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud](#) website.

## PRODUCT SAFETY RECALLS

Click on the product for more details.

Product	Company	Reason
<a href="#">Microwarmer (Hot Water Bottle)</a>	Boots	Personal Injury
<a href="#">Hot Water Bottle</a>	Boots	Personal Injury
<a href="#">Travel Kettle</a>	Boots	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Rubber Torch</a>	Poundland	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Binoculars</a>	Poundland	Safety hazard
<a href="#">HP Notebook Battery</a>	HP	Fire hazard
<a href="#">Xcursion Travel System</a>	Mothercare	Fire hazard

For a list of up to date product recalls, please visit the [Trading Standards Institute website](#).

## TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we publish figures for services carried out for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for **1 April to 30 June, 2011**:

### Consumer complaints: 250 (-19 from last quarter)

Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.

### Business advice requests from traders: 72 (+10)

We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.

### Reported scams: 15 (+5)

We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.

### Counterfeiting complaints: 4 (+1)

Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.

### Test purchasing of age restricted products: 0 (-18)

Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.

### Programmed routine business premises visits: 145 (-49)

Every shop in Renfrewshire is inspected by us over a two year period to ensure that they are complying with current trading laws and regulations.

## e-update 23: Sent 17.11.11

### NATIONAL CONSUMER WEEK (21 - 25 NOVEMBER)

'Good sports don't fake it' is the message behind this year's National Consumer Week

Trading standards officers are urging consumers to check, double check and check again to stay safe from fraudsters exploiting one of the country's favourite pastimes – sports.

The Good Sports Don't Fake It campaign is putting the spotlight on some of the fakes and scams and is giving consumers a CHECK list to stay safe:

- C** Choose your shopping outlets and websites carefully.
- H** Help yourself. If the deal is too good to be true then it probably is.
- E** Ensure you look for authentic branding and holograms.
- C** Contact the authorities if you are concerned.
- K** Keep a copy of your order and receipts.

Our own trading standards team will be in the Atrium Cafe of Renfrewshire House on 22, 23 and 24 Nov to advise you on how to look out for sporting scams.

You can also get more information on the [Trading Standards Institute](#) website.

**Christmas Special e-update out soon**

## e-update 24: Sent 13.12.11

### ONLINE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WARNING

Every Monday for the next three weeks are likely to see bumper online sales. This year's online Christmas purchases will represent an increase of 14% from the same period last year. This is an excellent opportunity for fraudsters. At least 37% of adult consumers have experienced online shopping fraud since the beginning of 2011. Please visit [Action Fraud](#) for more information. Also see their [Be Card Smart](#) campaign.

### WHICH? MAGAZINE AND OFFICE OF FAIR TRADING - CHRISTMAS SHOPPING ADVICE

Visit [Which? Magazine website](#) for advice on your rights when shopping this Christmas.

The OFT is urging shoppers to [know their consumer rights](#) when buying clothes for the Christmas party season or in New Year sales.

## COMMUNITY SAFETY CHRISTMAS SHOP

Renfrewshire Council have launched a "Community Safety Shop" - a one stop shop for advice and guidance on a number of issues in the run-up to Christmas. There will be a limited number of free gifts and literature on offer. The shop is located on the top floor the Paisley Centre and will be open until the 24th December.

## CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - SEASONAL TOP TIPS

As well as being a time for celebration, Christmas can also be stressful and expensive. As the countdown begins, [Citizen's Advice Bureau's \(CAB\) seasonal tips](#) will help you manage your money and avoid some common consumer problems. A new tip will be revealed each day so don't forget to check their page every day. You can also follow CAB on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## TRADING STANDARDS INSTITUTE - COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

The Trading Standards Institute have produced a [Countdown to Christmas Advent Calendar](#). Each day you will reveal a different role that is undertaken by your local Trading Standards team.

## CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU & GOOGLE LAUNCH NEW ONLINE SAFETY WEBSITE

A new website called [Good to Know](#), has been launched by Google and the Consumer Advice Bureau. It contains a range of helpful information on how to keep yourself safe online. Everything from how to come up with creating a strong password, to finding out what a 'cookie' is and how it works. It's not just for Internet novices and beginners. Experienced web users will also benefit from the advice on the site on how to keep your personal data safe online.

## TRUSTED TRADER SCHEME INVITES RENFREWSHIRE BUSINESSES TO APPLY

Renfrewshire Trading Standards have invited Renfrewshire traders to apply to be members of their new [Trusted Trader Scheme](#). Traders will be vetted for suitability before being asked to provide comments and ratings from previous work. These comments and ratings will be published on our new webpages, launching to the public in early January.

## SCAM WARNINGS

Click on the scam for more details.

Scam	Details
<a href="#">Facebook 'Coca Cola' Scam</a>	This link contains no video describing the effects of Coca Cola and is just an attempt to get your personal information. <b>Just ignore them.</b>
<a href="#">Facebook &amp; Twitter Coupon Code Scam</a>	A 'coupon code' scam offers discounts on popular stores and products. The posts include a link that users follow in order to access the coupon or discount codes. It will take them through to another website before it redirects them to the real online store. The misdirected site will usually contain malware or 'Trojan horses'.
<a href="#">PayPal phishing scam</a>	PayPal account holders are being warned about a new phishing email scam that claims to be notifying them that their email address has been changed.
<a href="#">iTunes Scam Certificate</a>	An email promising \$50 equivalent discount for anyone shopping on the iTunes store has been circulating..
<a href="#">Fake energy saving device</a>	Scammers have tricked people into paying £99 for an energy-saving device that doesn't work. UK Trading Standards have received more than 200 complaints about the scammers - who sell a plug-in energy device they claim saves 40% off your energy bill.
<a href="#">Fake PC Security</a>	<b>(Due to the high occurrence of this scam we have once again repeated a warning from e-updates 18, 20 &amp; 22)</b> You may receive a phone call from someone claiming to be from Microsoft, your Internet Service Provider, or another legitimate sounding company, advising that you have a serious virus on your computer. The scam tricks people into paying for a remote fix to the 'virus', and also allows the scammers access to all the data on your PC.

You can find out the latest news on scams by visiting the [Action Fraud](#) website.

## PRODUCT SAFETY RECALLS

Click on the product for more details.

Product	Company	Reason
<a href="#">Halogen Heater 1200W and 1600W</a>	Tesco	Fire hazard
<a href="#">Nodding Reindeer Silhouette Christmas Decoration</a>	Argos & Homebase	Personal injury
<a href="#">Felko Christmas figures and gumball machines</a>	Creme d'Or	Choking hazard
<a href="#">iPod Nano (1st Gen)</a>	Apple	Fire hazard
<a href="#">PC62SS American Fridge Freezers</a>	CDA	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Swinging Cribs and Gliding Cribs</a>	Mothercare	Safety hazard
<a href="#">Double Over Electric Blanket</a>	Morphy Richards	Fire hazard

For a list of up to date product recalls, please visit the [Trading Standards Institute website](#).

## TRADING STANDARDS: QUARTERLY FIGURES

Every three months we publish figures for services carried out for Renfrewshire residents and businesses. The following figures are for **1 July to 30 September 2011**:

### Consumer complaints: 258 (+8 from last quarter)

Consumer complaints are referred to us for action from Consumer Direct. We offer an advice and mediation service which aims to assist consumers and traders resolve consumer complaints amicably without the need for court action.

### Business advice requests from traders: 83 (+11)

We offer business advice to Renfrewshire traders to ensure they are complying with relevant legislation and to help them resolve any consumer complaints they may receive.

### Reported scams: 13 (-2)

We offer advice to consumers who have been scammed, and also report the scammers to the Office of Fair Trading for further investigation and possible prosecution.

### Counterfeiting complaints: 4 (-)

Consumers who have purchased counterfeit goods can report them to us for further investigation and action.

**Test purchasing of age restricted products: 0 (-)**

*Underage volunteers are used to attempt purchase of age restricted products from shops in Renfrewshire. Any trader caught selling to our volunteers are given a warning that they will be prosecuted if caught again.*

**ONLINE COMPLAINT REPORTING FORM**

Renfrewshire Trading Standards have launched an online complaint reporting form. This form asks the relevant questions that are required to assist us in resolving consumer complaints. You can view the form on our [website](#).

**CHOOSING A REPUTABLE TRADER [NEW]**

You can use our [trader checklist](#) to help you select a reliable trader and guide you through the process of forming a contract.



**Have a Safe and Happy Christmas**  
**from everyone at**  
**Renfrewshire Trading Standards**

If you have not already signed up to Renfrewshire Trading Standards e-update, then send an e-mail to [ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk) with the subject line 'e-update' and YES as the text.

You can unsubscribe at any time by sending an e-mail with the subject line 'e-update' and the STOP as the text.

**Do you think you may have an item that should be published in our e-update?**

**e-mail your suggestion to: [ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:ts.es@renfrewshire.gov.uk)**

**Do you wish to report underage sales anonymously?**

Telephone 0141 840 3460 in confidence.  
e-mail: [veronica.mcginley@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:veronica.mcginley@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk)

**Do you wish to report the sale of counterfeit goods?**

Telephone 0141 840 3146 in confidence.  
e-mail: [faye.wilson@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk](mailto:faye.wilson@renfrewshire.gsx.gov.uk)



Renfrewshire  
Council