

CROYDON TRADING STANDARDS

COMMUNITY ALERT

Cost of Living Scams

The Chartered Trading Standards Institute has issued a stark warning in regards to the number of scams appearing in relation to the cost of living crisis and wants to warn consumers about unwittingly engaging with scammers.

CTSI Lead Officer for Scams and Doorstep Crime, Katherine Hart, said:

“There has been a huge surge in energy-efficiency scams offering rebates and offers to apply for grants. With the rise of costs in fuel bills and the cost-of-living concerns during the upcoming winter months, I urge the public to be on its guard because these types of emails and texts are attempts to scam.

“I also expect that scammers will target households in the coming weeks regarding the **£150 Disability Cost of Living payment**. Households don't need to apply for the rebate as suppliers are automatically applying it to bills for six months from October. If consumers receive emails or texts out of the blue, then report texts to 7726, emails to report@phishing.gov.uk and delete the message.

How to protect yourself

Energy Bill Discount : £400 off energy bills for households in Great Britain from October 2022. You **do not need to apply for the scheme** and you will not be asked for your bank details.

Disability Cost of Living Payment: £150 rebate. You **do not need to apply for the scheme** and you will not be asked for your bank details.

Spotted a suspicious text message? Forward it to **7726** (it's free of charge). If you forward a text to 7726, your provider can investigate the origin of the text and arrange to block or ban the sender if it's found to be malicious.

Received a suspicious email? Do not click on any links – simply forward the email to [**report@phishing.gov.uk**](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and the National Cyber Security Centre will investigate.

- For advice on how to stay secure online, visit: [**www.cyberaware.gov.uk**](http://www.cyberaware.gov.uk)
- For the full CTSI article please visit: [**CTSI issues warning on energy scams - Journal Of Trading Standards**](#)

Please remember to report any scam to **Action Fraud 0300 123 2040**.

If you have actually been the victim of a trader or scam such as the above and need help, or you require consumer advice, please call the **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline 0808 223 1133**