

TS Alert Message from Kent Trading Standards

Sent By (include Name, Address and Contact Details)

Trading Standards, Advice and Education

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Telephone 01233 652385 email: tsadvice@kent.gov.uk

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent

Message

Trading Standards are advising consumers to still be vigilant about a scam involving electricity prepayment meter keys which we sent a message about in January this year. The scam operates by consumers being offered £50 worth of prepayment meter top-up, at half the price. The rogue salesmen then push a 'cloned' key into the householder's meter to add the credit. Customers get their extra electricity but, since the credit is illegal and their electricity supplier will be aware of this, they may end up having to pay their energy supplier as well – so effectively paying twice. Energy companies can identify homes using electricity that has not been paid for.

More than 5,300 incidents have been reported in Kent this year. Crimestoppers are now offering a £10,000 reward to anyone who can supply information leading to the arrest and conviction of those involved in this crime. Director of Operations at Crimestoppers, urged anyone who was approached with an energy meter top-up at their doorstep not to get involved. Energy UK has stated that no official sellers of electricity meter top-ups operate door-to-door. You should only buy credit for your pre-pay electricity meter from official outlets such as the Post Office, Paypoint or Payzone.

If you suspect that someone you know of is being targeted by doorstep criminals, please contact Trading Standards through Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.

Expiry Date

31/03/11

The normal period for validity of messages will be seven days

Distribution

Messages are not confidential and can be used for public distribution

Signed

Elizabeth Tidy

Date

24/03/11