



Coming soon! Tax bonus payment

SCAMwatch is again warning consumers to be on the lookout for bogus phone calls, emails and other scams relating to the government's economic stimulus package. As part of the economic stimulus package, the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and Centrelink will make one-off bonus payments to eligible Australians.

The ATO will start making tax bonus payments in early April 2009.

SCAMwatch has received reports of scammers sending bogus emails or calling to seek personal information such as the person's name, date of birth, address and bank details.

Scammers pose as government officials (such as the ATO and Centrelink) and inform the recipient that an application form must be completed to receive the bonus payments when this is not the case.

SCAMwatch understands that the majority of Australians will not need to do anything to receive payments. The ATO will make payments into accounts nominated in 2007-08 tax returns.

Some taxpayers, such as those who have not yet lodged their 2007-08 return and those who have changed banking details, may need to take action to receive payments. For more information, visit the ATO website or call 1300 686 636.

Centrelink started distributing the household stimulus payments in March 2009. For more information, visit the Centrelink website or call 1800 050 004.

SCAMwatch stresses that the ATO, Centrelink, banks and financial institutions will never send emails requesting verification of personal details.

Protect yourself

- Never send your personal, credit card or banking details over the phone, in response to unsolicited emails or enter it on any website if you are not certain it is genuine.
- If you receive unsolicited emails claiming to be from the ATO, Centrelink or your bank - delete them immediately!
- Don't open any attachments or click on any links or reply to these emails.
- Use a phone number or web address that you know is legitimate such as official letters from the organisation like a bank statements or phone book. Never rely on contact details provided in unsolicited emails.

More Information

Explore SCAMwatch to find out more about these types of scams (often called 'phishing' scams), learn how you can protect yourself against scammers or to report a scam.

Source:

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/757362>

Note: residents may believe that this article was in last month's newsletter. A similar one was, but as SCAMwatch has seen fit to issue a further warning, so too does this newsletter. *Ed.*

Proposed Aged Care Development in Farrer

Mandir Ashram Pty Ltd has submitted to the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) an amendment to its Development Application 200813312 for an aged care facility in Beasley and Drevermann Streets, Farrer. The documentation, including plans, can be viewed on the ACTPLA's website:

www.actpla.act.gov.au

Representations concerning the development must be lodged with ACTPLA by **21 April 2009**.

A special meeting of the Woden Valley Community Council is proposed, to enable the architect to explain the amendments and to answer any community concerns. At the time of going to print, the Council was awaiting confirmation that the meeting may be held on **Wednesday, 15 April at 7.30 pm** at the Hellenic Club. Please make an effort to attend this important meeting, if it goes ahead. Contact Woden Valley Community Council on 6281 0096 or at wvcc@bigpond.net.au

Why join Neighbourhood Watch?

Many residents think that because they receive the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter, that they are members of Neighbourhood Watch. This is not so. To become a member of Neighbourhood Watch, you should fill in an application form, and give it to your Area Coordinator, or email the ACT Neighbourhood Watch Secretary. Forms and contact details are available at www.nhwact.com.au. You should be aware that membership is subject to a police check.

So, why join? Neighbourhood Watch encourages residents to keep an eye on their neighbours' property, particularly if no one is home, and to report any suspicious behaviour to police. This has proven to be a very effective tool, and a number of incidents in the past month have been averted because of residents' alertness.

Membership also gives your community a greater voice in, and awareness of, what is happening in your suburb. So become a member and increase the ranks of members, and their voice, in your area.

Please assist our police by reporting all suspicious activity to: CRIME STOPPERS use: 1800 333 000.

**For police attendance use: 131 444.
But, for all life-threatening emergencies use: "0 0 0"**



Home security software

Free software package – ‘mystuff’

Housebreaking is one of the most common crimes experienced by residents in the ACT. By identifying your valuables and putting together a record of all your property, not only will you deter thieves; you'll give ACT Policing a better chance of finding your stolen property and returning it to you.

That's where *mystuff* comes in. It is a free, easy-to-use home security record management software system provided by ACT Policing to help you protect your property. It allows you to create an accurate, concise, and permanent record of your personal property.

mystuff also includes a number of important home security tips to help safeguard your home and property against house break-ins.

It will take approximately seven to ten minutes to download *mystuff*, using a 56k modem with a good telephone connection. However this can vary according to modems, telephone lines and internet traffic.

Download the free software package, *mystuff* and read further information at http://afp.gov.au/act/crime_prevention/home_security_software.html
Source: http://afp.gov.au/act/crime_prevention/home_security_software.html

Smoke alarms

Did you remember to change the batteries on your smoke detectors, now that daylight saving has ceased? The ACT Fire Brigade recommends replacing the batteries each year when daylight saving ceases.

There are two main types of alarms used in homes, photo-electric and ionisation alarms. The Fire Brigade recommends that all homes be fitted with Australian Standards-approved photo-electric smoke alarms. Photo-electric alarms are more effective at detecting slow burning and smouldering fires. If you currently have ionisation smoke alarms in your home, you may choose to maintain them until the end of their service life. Use a long-life alkaline battery in these alarms, and change them annually. Now is the time to change them, if you haven't already.

Recycling

If you take your recycling to your recycling in a plastic bag, and put the recycling in the bin in the bag, none of it will be recycled. Initial sorting is done by laser, so that anything in a plastic bag is read as plastic and goes to landfill. So when you take your recycling to the recycling bin in a bag, tip the recycling out of the bag and into the bin, and help your environment.

Safety House program

The Safety House program is a community based network of safe places in a local area. Safety Houses can be a house, shop or a business and they can provide assistance to children should they feel unsafe, threatened or unsure, primarily when travelling to and from school. The program also aims to play a preventative role in community safety, providing safer neighbourhoods for children.

The Safety House logo, a smiling house on a yellow background was chosen to represent a warm, friendly place that is easily identified. A Safety House can be a house, shop or business where assistance will be provided to anyone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Information on the history of the Safety House program can be found at Safety House Association of Victoria Website.

Using a Safety House

Anyone can seek help from a Safety House. The three most common reasons for help being sought are:

- bullying
- being lost, and
- being approached or followed.

To use a Safety House, simply knock on the door for assistance. Police checks are undertaken on the occupants of the premises before they are accepted as Safety House.

How to become a Safety House

Any member of the community can offer their house or business premises as a Safety House. A Safety Householder is not expected to solve the problem, only to assess the situation and contact the appropriate person/s who could be a parent, babysitter, friend, and relative, Ambulance or Police.

If you are interested in becoming a Safety House, please use the email form or mobile phone number below. For additional information visit the ACT Safety House Association website <http://www.safetyhouseact.org.au/>

Contacts

Safety House applications and general enquiries (ACT only) - ACT Safety House Association Inc, GPO Box 1220
Canberra City ACT 2601 Ph: 0432 499 554, or email
ACT Safety House at
https://www.afp.gov.au/email_forms/safety_house.html

Source: http://www.afp.gov.au/act/crime_prevention/safety_house_program.html