



Trading Standards, Graham Hill House, Electric Avenue, Ferry Hinksey Road, Oxford OX2 0BY 0845 051 0845

Email: trading_standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Welcome to Oxfordshire County Council Trading Standards' Business News Express Issue 4

In this edition, you will find useful information on the following:

- Change in law for sale of video games;
- Trans Fats advice for small businesses;
- Scrapping of specific Safety Regulations;
- Advertising/publishing scams;
- Mandate Fraud;
- Energy performance certificates on holiday lets;
- Change to our phone system;

Change in legislation for video games

After 30/7/12, video games that are suitable for viewing by people aged 12 and over can only be supplied in the UK if they have been classified by the Video Standards council. The games and their packaging has to be marked in a certain way in accordance with the Regulations. The change in the law makes it an offence to

- Deal in non-classified games,
- Sell to underage children,
- Sell a game with incorrect markings etc.

The classification symbols you will see are



The 3 and 7 are voluntary markings only and do not come into the enforcement regime.

You may also see classification icons;



These are only required if the certificate says they must be displayed, and are the pictorial description of the content, such as bad language, sex, violence.

The 12, 16, and 18 markings are compulsory for all games classified on and after 30/7/12 –games already classified under the old voluntary regime are not covered by the marking requirements. These symbols must be on the face, of every disc, together with the unique title of the game.

The age classification symbol must be on one of the largest faces of the case and the symbol plus the classification icon should be on another face of the case unless you can see this info marked on the disc through the case.

Artificial Trans Fats advice for small businesses

The artificial trans fats advice for small businesses has now been published by the Food Standards Agency and is available at;

<http://responsibilitydeal.dh.gov.uk/2012/01/19/advice-for-small-businesses-on-removing-artificial-trans-fats/>

Scrapping of certain Safety Regulations

The government, as part of a drive to reduce red tape is going to scrap the following Regulations over the next couple of months:

- Bunk Beds (Entrapment Hazards) (Safety) Regulations 1987
- Children's Clothing (Hood Cords) Regulations 1976
- Imitation Dummies (Safety) Regulations 1993
- Wheeled Child Conveyances (Safety) Regulations 1997
- Gas cooking Appliances (Safety) Regulations 1989
- Heating Appliances (Fireguards) (Safety) Regulations 1991
- Gas Catalytic Heaters (Safety) Regulations 1984
- All-Terrain Motor Vehicle (Safety) Regulations 1989
- Cooking Utensils (Safety) Regulations 1972
- Indication of Prices (Beds) Order 1978
- Child Resistant Packaging and Tactile Danger Warning (Safety) (Revocation) Regulations 1992
- Stands for Carry-cots (Safety) (Revocation) Regulations 1996
- Magnetic Toys (Safety) (Revocations) Regulations 2009

Any Safety issues/requirements with these products will now be covered by the General Product Safety Regulations and British or European Standards. Please contact us if you need any further information.

Advertisement/Publication Scam

We have seen an increase in the number of cold callers trying to sell advertising space in various publications supposedly benefiting various police, fire service and NHS charities to businesses. Our advice is as follows:

- Advise your staff not to commit to anything over the phone or to pass these calls to one person in the company to deal with.
- Check out who you are dealing with (e.g. name/address). You can then search these on the internet to see if they are legitimate.

- Ask for a copy of the publication before committing to anything or a charity number, if they are claiming to be a charity.
- Never hand over money/account details if you don't know who you are dealing with.

Mandate Fraud. (Also known as Creditor Fraud and Supplier Account Takeover Fraud)

This fraud involves changing of account details for supplier or customer accounts in order to gain control of an account and benefit from unauthorised payments. This could be a change of bank details in a direct debit, or manipulation of credit card activity. Another variation is the changing of an employee's bank account details for their salary, particularly when a bonus is due.

All companies and organisations are urged to ensure that they have robust authorisation and monitoring procedures in place for the creation and changing of bank details and monitoring of payments.

This alert also applies when providing account details in order to set up new payments or amend them.

Requests may be received by phone, letter or email to update account details. These requests should be monitored, checked and authorised before changes are made.

The Metropolitan Police advise:

- All staff should be wary of providing sensitive company information, by phone or other means, especially contract and account information including references.
- Establish with suppliers, and internally, points of contact for handling and changing sensitive information for that may benefit fraudsters.
- Call-back your supplier using records in your system (not on the letter) to check the veracity of the request.
- Get a confirmatory email from the expected corporate email address.
- Make a note of your enquiries; be willing to double check information.
- Other policies may need review - clear desk, information security, staff vetting, internal and external financial controls.

Energy performance certificates on holiday lets

There has been a in central government on whether holiday lets require an energy performance certificate. In line with the view of Local Government Regulation, Oxfordshire Trading Standards is taking the view that Energy Performance Certificates are not required for holiday lettings at the current time.

If you receive any demands for payment, please contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline for more advice on 08454 04 05 06.

Change to our phone system

Oxfordshire Trading Standards calls on option 1 of our phone system are now being handled by our partner organisation, the Citizens Advice Consumer helpline. If you are having problems with:

- a scam text/email/call
- goods which you have purchased or a contract,
- or are not sure how to deal with an awkward customer,

you can talk to Citizens Advice helpline who will advise you on what to do next. All information is then passed to the Trading Standards Service to decide if it is an issue on which we can act. Option 2 can still be used for business advice on your labels or the law in general, or for booking Weights and Measures appointments.

We always welcome feedback on the newsletter. Please email us at trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

If you wish to unsubscribe from the newsletter, please email trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk