

Invoices from Yellow Pages 24

Businesses, schools and nursing homes across the county are being warned to watch out for bogus invoices that claim to be from directory publisher Yell in relation to its products and services.

Norfolk County Council Trading Standards has teamed up with Yell to push out the warning about companies impersonating the publisher - particularly those claiming to be behind Yellow Pages and Yell.com. We initially issued this warning on our business scam alert system on 8th July 2009 but are re-issuing it following a number of complaints including two from Norfolk schools that recently received a bogus £500 invoice.

The scammers seek to mislead Yell customers into signing up to fake advertising contracts which sometimes result in repeated requests for payment by phone. Trading Standards are also concerned that some people may be duped into thinking they are taking out Yell advertising or renewing existing advertising programmes.

Bogus order forms are sent by e-mail or fax and contain lookalike "Yellow Pages" branding. Customers who return the form subsequently receive invoices and requests for payment.

Some have even received threatening telephone calls. In one instance, scammers have even set up copycat websites resembling Yell.com.

The scams are sophisticated and run by complex overseas networks. Yell customers should be particularly alert to any correspondence they receive containing contact, or bank account details in Holland or Germany. Some of the names to beware of are:

- Yellow Page UK or Yellow Page AG, which displays an inverted "walking fingers" logo
- Yellow Pages 24
- UK Yellow Guide

We urgently need to find a company who did pay, so that we can assist with the ongoing investigation. If you have paid the invoice or are aware of anyone who has, please contact Trading Standards urgently on 0344 800 8013. Anyone receiving contact from these traders or similar should ignore any order forms and should not pay any invoices. Instead you should keep all the correspondence and contact us on the number above.

To sign up to Norfolk County Council Trading Standards business scam alert system, please visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/tradingstandards