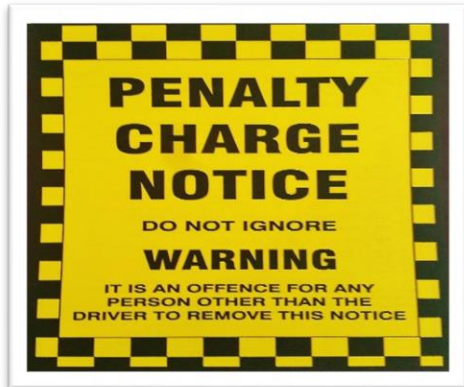


TV Alert – Fake Parking Fines



Increase in Car Park Fines – Top
Tips to stay safe from Car Park
Scammers.

New Warnings have been issued by Police Forces and Councils across the country after a rise in parking scams across the summer.

From Fake Text messages about unpaid tickets to tampered car park machines that secretly steal your card details, fraudsters are becoming increasingly creative.

Detective Inspector Duncan Wynn, Head of Central Fraud Unit at Thames Valley Police, said:

We have recently seen an increase within the Thames Valley area and I would urge you to remain vigilant and know what the signs are to keep yourself safe from this type of fraud.

- I urge you to become part of the solution by ensuring you forward spam calls and texts messages to 7726 and forwarding suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk
- Every fraud starts through a route of contact which is covered in our [Fraud Protection toolkit](#)
- Knowledge and collective action are our biggest asset when rising to the challenge of fraud.
- I encourage you all to start having conversations about fraud, especially with any vulnerable family members or those in your community.
- Together, we will continue to rise to the challenge of fraud.

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Three signs to ascertain that it is a genuine parking notice

- Real Parking fines will include the vehicle registration
- Real Parking fines will show the time/date of the offence
- Real Parking fines will show the Location where the alleged offence took place

A genuine fine will always come in writing and will be left on your windscreen, handed to you in person or arrive in the post.

There are three types of fines you may receive

- A penalty charge notice issued by the council
- A fixed penalty notice issued by the police usually linked to offences such as speeding.
- A parking charge notice issued by a private company.

It is worth remembering that parking charge notices “aren’t technically fines, they are invoices for breaching parking rules”

“Fraudsters prey on creating pressure which is designed to make you act quickly but [Stop! Think Fraud](#) empowers us to collectively join together to help stop fraud in its tracks.”

Don’t click on links in texts

If you get a text out of the blue saying that you owe money for an unpaid parking ticket, stop before you click. One of the most common tactics is a fake text or email demanding payment for an unpaid fine.

Nick Stapleton BBC scams expert explains that these texts usually come with a link you are told to click on to pay the fine and “use urgent and threatening language to make you panic”

Some texts may even say that your licence will be revoked if you do not pay for the ticket but “that is not how it works, you won’t lose your licence”

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If you have received a text message that does not feel right, STOP!

- break the contact – do not reply, do not click on any links, do not call any phone numbers, or make any payments
- check if it is genuine: contact the organisation directly using an email address or phone number you know is correct, e.g. from your utility bills, via a search engine, on the back of your card or by [calling 159](#) for banks
- forward the message for free to 7726

What to do if you've already responded to the message

Don't panic! What you do next depends on whether you've replied, clicked a link, sent information or made a payment. Take a look at Stop! Think Fraud for their advice on [what to do if you've been a victim of fraud](#).

Check for skimming devices on parking machines

A new scam, which is increasing according to [Action Fraud](#), targets people paying for parking at machines.

Fraudsters attach a physical device to the contactless payment reader on a parking machine and when you try to pay, the machine displays a "card declined" message.

While you walk off to try another machine, the skimming device has already stolen your card details

Signs to look out for to check if the machine has been tampered with:

- **Look for an extra sticker.** Check there is not an extra sticker or item placed on top of the contactless button
- **Verify Branding.** Look for correct logos and branding. Fraudsters often use stickers with mismatched logos.
- **Trust your Instincts:** If something looks or feels suspicious, do not use the machine.

If you feel like there is something not quite right with the machine you can pay in cash or through a parking app.

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For more advice on how to protect yourself from fraud:

<https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk/>

If you have lost money or provided financial information because of a phishing fraud, notify your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud at actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on 101.