



CONNECTICUT CONSUMER PROTECTION MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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SCAM ALERT

What it is: Fake Party Invitations

How it works: Scammers will send an electronic invitation, usually addressed from someone you know. However, once you click “View Details,” it will ask you to log into your account. Don’t login, this is a scam.

If you receive an online invitation, be sure to:

- Verify with the real host first.
- Don’t click on the “Open Invitation” link
- If it tells you to enter your email or password to view more details, don’t do it.
- If the URL looks off or does not end with “.com” close the tab and report to Spam.

LOCKED OUT? BE WARY OF SCAMMERS POSING AS LOCKSMITH TECHNICIANS

Locksmith scams are an example of a “bait-and-switch” deceptive tactic where the consumer is initially offered a low price for an unlocking service.

However, when the alleged locksmith arrives, they will claim that the project is “more complicated than anticipated” and increase the price. Scammers will often use high-pressure tactics and demand cash.

Ways to avoid a locksmith scam:

- **Verify the individual, not the business:** In Connecticut, each individual performing locksmith services must be registered with DCP. Consumers can search the name of the locksmith technician on eLicense.ct.gov to verify they hold an active registration.
- **The first business name is not always the most trustworthy:** Fraudulent businesses will pay for strong keywords that cause their business to appear at the top of the search results. This is intended to deceive consumers who are doing a quick search of nearby businesses.
- **Shop local:** Contact a locksmith with a local storefront or a reputable roadside assistance organization, such as AAA.
- **Confirm the address:** Search the physical address and choose the “street view” feature to verify if the address matches the business.
- **Pay attention to the phone number:** *Is it a local number or is it an out-of-state area code?* Phony locksmith businesses will have multiple phone numbers direct to one call center that are often out of state or out of the country, as part of a larger scheme. If the person over the phone cannot provide an exact address, hang up.
- **Ask for full estimate upfront:** When calling the business, ask for a full price upfront, including service and travel costs. Before the work begins, ask for a written quote.

SPEAKING REQUESTS

Want DCP to speak to your organization, or table at your event? Send detailed requests to DCP.Education@ct.gov.

Contact Us

Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection

450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 901

Hartford, CT 06103-1840

Main Line: (860) 713-6100 (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Consumer Complaint Center

(860) 713-6300

Toll Free: (800) 842-2649

8:30am-4:30pm

Email: DCP.complaints@ct.gov

VISIT US ONLINE

CT.GOV/DCP

Have a tip we missed? A topic you want more information about?

Send us an email at

DCP.Communications@ct.gov

Follow us on social media:

Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection
@CTDCP



- **No proof, no business:** Scammers will often appear in unmarked vehicles, no uniform, and are unable to provide any identification. If the locksmith uses high-pressure tactics or cannot provide a registration number, you have the right to refuse a service.
- **Read the reviews closely:** Locksmith scammers will pay for fake Google reviews to deceive consumers as a highly rated business. Instead, search the business name on independent websites such as the Better Business Bureau and Yelp.

To learn more about locksmith scams, [visit our website](http://ct.gov/dcp) at ct.gov/dcp.

Summer Storm Safety

Summer storms arrive quickly, leaving consumers with little time to prepare. Before a storm hits, we recommend taking the following steps to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your property.

- **Clear backyard of debris:** Do an inspection throughout your yard for any debris that could be blown into your windows, walls, and roof of the house.
 - This includes outside furniture, equipment, and decorations.
- **Prepare a survival kit:** Include a first-aid kit, portable charger, flashlight, bottled water, and non-perishable food items.
- **Keep your generator outside:** Never run your generator indoors. Generators should be located at least 10 feet away from windows, doors and vents.
- **Be wary of storm damage repair scams:** Fraudulent contractors will approach homeowners with damage repair services. If they are offering at an extremely low price or do not provide a contract – it's a scam.

Have you checked out our new Scam Zone?

Stay up to date with the latest scam trends:

https://portal.ct.gov/dcp/scam-zone?language=en_US