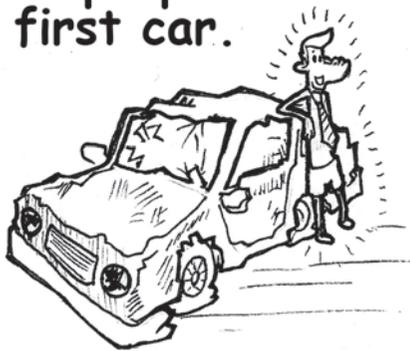


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**What! R30 000. for this trash!**



It had a full tank of petrol. ♡ ♡ ♡



# The Rental Fraud Game...

**Rustenburg** – The scammer keeps on advertising in another Rustenburg newspaper! This week the ad reads as follows: TOWNHOUSES to let/Magalies View Double storey 3 bed, 2 bath, kitchen, living area, enclosed garden and double lock-up garage, available immediately R4500 pm. Cell 072-328-0929. Last week the perpetrator used another number – 072 690 7523 and targeted the property right next door. He also corresponded via local security guards and domestic workers. It works like this: You reply to the ad, eager to get hold of that bargain of a rental. He agrees to meet you at the said location. When you get there, the security lets you in. The security, after being called by the scammer, shows you the property. Yes, he knows the name and the number of the security guard. Weird? That is exactly what happened to Mabel Labuschagne last week. "He gives you an Afrikaans name, but is definitely English speaking," Mabel said. This week the property on show is the Rosa de Blank complex which is situated right next to last week's property. Again, the security guard immediately opened the boom gate. This time however, there was a domestic worker available. Somehow the scammer this time told the domestic worker to show the prospective renters the property. Although the scammer wants to create an "I am in Durban" illusion, this scam has a very local flavour to it. Although it is more probable that he would have a partner in this rental scamming game, he might be playing this game all on his own. And off course, anyone in Rustenburg can now get a Johannesburg or a Durban fax number registered, and receive their faxes at home on their laptop. Neat, right?... One of the strategies of rental scammers is

to price the 'fake' rental below the average rental rate in a specific market. This allows the scammers to receive as many inquiries as possible. The low rate for prime renting offered in the classifieds mentioned, should have been a red flag. Don't be fooled by his cool demeanour or his professional approach.

"Kyk die kat uit die boom uit" as Ouma used to say.

One way to see if a rental is too good to be true is to look at average rental rates for similar properties within the same area. One of the ways these crooks operate is to advertise a house or apartment, demand first-month's rent, a security deposit or both up front, and then vanish.

The other type is intimately related to the ongoing mortgage meltdown, and involves property owners renting units to tenants while knowing full well that the property is in foreclosure.

In most cases, the unknowing renter's first clue that something is amiss is when an eviction notice shows up at the door.

Although not everybody is chuffed to register for RICA, this new legislation may offer some protection against fraud like this. South Africa's RICA law is intended to help authorities track down subscribers with SIM cards linked to criminal activity.

The golden rule is still if it seems too good to be true, then it is probably too good to be true.

Furthermore, please visit [www.scams.co.za](http://www.scams.co.za) or call the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa 011 781-2006.





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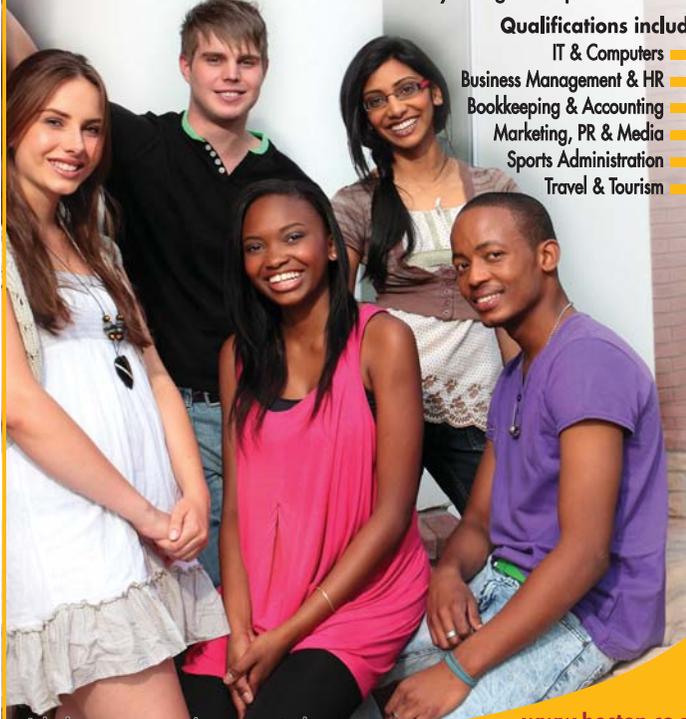
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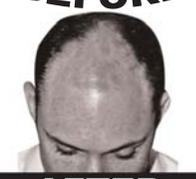
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