



Fuel prices are set for another hike at the end of January. This is according to the Automobile Association (AA), which was commenting on unaudited mid-month fuel price data released by the Central Energy Fund (CEF). "The Rand/US dollar exchange rate has firmed slightly since the start of January 2017," the AA said. "But international oil prices have surged ahead by a far greater margin."

The AA is predicting that petrol is set to jump by 44 cents, diesel by 37 cents, and illuminating paraffin by 31 cents. "There is always the hope that the spike in international oil prices will not persist, but that seems unlikely," the Association said. "South Africans should already be thinking of trimming any unnecessary expenses to accommodate a series of fuel price hikes which seem likely in the medium term," the AA concluded.

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'Clever' door-to-door SCAM

Rustenburg – "This latest door-to-door delivery scam is cleverly controlled and I ask the community to take a bit of time and read through this article. It's an eye-opener," Captain Elsabé Augoustides, police spokesperson, shared on 17 January 2017.

The following information is an account of one of the recently reported incidents...

"I received a call from someone. He said he was phoning from 'Express Couriers' and asked if I was going to be home to receive and sign for a package. "The caller said that the delivery would arrive at my home in roughly 1 hour. Sure enough, about an hour later, a uniformed delivery man turned up with a parcel and a bottle of wine. I was very surprised since I could recall no special occasion, and I certainly didn't expect anything like this. Intrigued, I inquired as to who the sender was. "The courier replied, 'I don't know, I'm only delivering the package.' "The courier man said that I was also going to receive a card on his next delivery. My birthday was around the corner, so I thought it was

a friend, and that they forgot to add the card to the wine. There was also a consignment note with the gift. "He then went on to explain that because the gift contained alcohol, there was a R257.50 'delivery/ verification charge' providing proof that he had actually delivered the package to an adult (of legal drinking age), and not just left it on the doorstep where it could be stolen or taken by anyone, especially a minor. "This sounded logical and I offered to pay him cash. He then said that the delivery company required payment to be by credit or debit card only, so that everything is properly accounted for. He added that they also don't carry cash to avoid loss or the likelihood of being targets for robbery. "My wife, who by this time was standing beside me, pulled out her credit card, gave it to the courier to swipe the card on a small mobile card machine, with a small screen and keypad and asked to key in the verification code. "Frankly at this point we never suspected anything abnormal and a receipt was printed out and given to us. He then wished us good day and went off. "To our horrible surprise, between Thursday

and the following Monday, R50,000 had been charged/ withdrawn from our credit account at various ATM machines. "Apparently the 'mobile credit card machine' which the delivery man carried, had all the info necessary to create a 'dummy' card with all our card details, of course with the verification code. "Upon finding out about the illegal transactions on our card, we immediately notified the bank to stop payment, but then it was already too late. We went to open a Police case, and it was confirmed that quite a number of households had been hit in a similar fashion. **WARNING:** Beware of accepting any 'surprise gifts or packages' which you neither expected nor personally ordered, especially if it involves any kind of payment as a condition of receiving the gift or package. Also never accept anything if you do not personally know or there is no proper identification of who the sender is. Above all, the only time you should give out any personal credit card information is when you yourself initiated the purchase or transaction!

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