

Problems caused by misinformation in an emergency

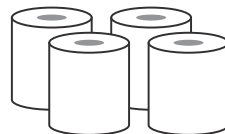


In times of emergency, such as natural disasters or an outbreak of infectious disease, there is a flood of information. Unfortunately, some of this may be false information spread with malicious intent. Learn how to properly judge whether information is correct or not, and don't just blindly believe or send out information without checking its credibility.

CASE 1

Spread of misinformation online

■ During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was confusion caused by the spread of misinformation, which led to people hoarding items that were in plentiful supply, such as toilet paper.



Tips for obtaining correct information in an emergency!

- **Get into the habit of choosing correct information** even before a disaster occurs!
- **In an emergency, get information from several sources and compare them!**
Getting information from sources other than the internet, such as books and newspapers, is also effective.
- If the information is a quotation or hearsay, **find the original source and check it!**
- **Check that the information is from a reliable source!**
- If the information is old, **be careful as the situation may be different now!**
- **Don't tell people or spread information about things you don't understand!**

When an emergency occurs, various types of consumer problems can arise amid the confusion. If you notice something that seems strange, seek advice from the person around you or the Consumer Affairs Center without delay!



Inquiries

Please get in touch if you have any worries or run into any problems!

Yokohama City Consumer's Center TEL: 045-845-6666

Weekdays: 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays:

9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Yokohama City Consumer's Center



Access the PDF data for this leaflet here



Yokohama City Consumer's Center

Prepare for emergencies and stay safe!

Tips for guarding yourself against consumer problems



The typhoon damaged my roof! I want to get it repaired, but...



Rumors of product shortages are spreading on social media, but are they true?



I got a call from my local government office saying that I could be eligible for a benefit, but is this really the case?

Check!

Earthquakes, wind and flood damage, epidemics... You never know when an emergency might strike.

In the event of an emergency, be careful not to fall victim to these kinds of consumer problems!

Consumer problems arising from earthquakes or wind and flood damage

In the event of a disaster such as an earthquake or wind and flood damage, people tend to contact us with problems related to repairing their homes.



CASE 1 Excessive repair bills

■ A contractor who came to inspect the roof after it was damaged in a disaster persuaded me to sign a contract for repairs. However, I now want to cancel it because it's too expensive. Is it possible to cancel it?



Things you can do to protect yourself

- **Don't sign a contract on the spot**, even if you are pressured into it by someone who says things like, "If you don't get it fixed now, you'll regret it later!"
- Seek advice from people around you and **be careful when signing a contract!**
- Get estimates from multiple companies and **make sure you check** the costs, the time it will take, and the reliability of the company.



CASE 2 Insurance scams

■ An insurance claim agent visited me and tried to persuade me to claim insurance for damage caused by a typhoon or heavy rain. Is there anything wrong with signing a contract?



Things you can do to protect yourself

- Whether or not compensation is covered by insurance depends on the contents of the contract, so check the contract and make inquiries yourself. **Check the contents of the contract before a disaster occurs!**
- If a claim for insurance money is made for a false reason, **you will be implicated in fraud!**
- There are **unscrupulous companies that charge high fees for successful claims without explaining this in advance.** **Be on your guard** against people who offer to help you make an insurance claim!



Consumer problems arising during an outbreak of infectious disease

During the COVID-19 pandemic, all sorts of problems arose that took advantage of consumers' fears.



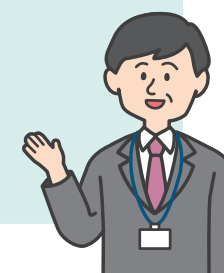
CASE 1 Unrequested mail order items

■ I received a package labeled "5 masks." There was no letter, order form, or invoice inside. I want to use the masks because I can't get them anywhere else, but it's a bit suspicious. I don't remember ordering them, and I have no idea where they came from. Will I be charged for them in the future?



Things you can do to protect yourself

- If you receive a package that you don't remember ordering, **check to see who sent it!**
- If you receive a package that you didn't order, **you can dispose of it immediately. You have no obligation to pay for it!**



CASE 2 Identity fraud

■ I received a phone call from someone claiming to be an employee of the city's COVID-19 countermeasures office, saying "We are distributing subsidies. Please tell us your bank account number so we can transfer the money to your account." It sounds suspicious.



Things you can do to protect yourself

- There seems to be a never-ending stream of cases where criminals posing as employees of public institutions such as city halls, financial institutions, mobile phone companies, etc., attempt to obtain the personal information and account details of their victims. **If you are asked for your account information, PIN number, or to send your cash card or bankbook over the phone, by email, or in person, check the name, affiliation, and contact details of the person you are speaking to, and then contact the relevant government agency or company directly to verify the information!**

