

NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, Administrator

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCDCA RETURNS TO GAFFNEY ON MAY 22, 2008

Columbia, SC... ...The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) will visit the Gaffney community on Thursday, May 22, 2008, to handle consumer complaints and questions. Regional SCDCA outreach coordinator Patty Guthrie will pay a visit to the Cherokee County Public Library located at 300 East Rutledge Avenue in Gaffney, SC 29340. Consumers may come with questions or complaints regarding a business between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Individuals are encouraged to bring documentation with them.

Ms. Guthrie will also have additional materials on identity theft available upon request. "With the increase in technology, identity thieves are getting more creative, so consumers must get smarter, if they are going to protect their personal information and their finances," said Donna DeMichael, Director of Consumer Services at SCDCA.

Did You Know?

- 20 percent of identity theft occurs through telecommunications and the Internet.
- Researchers say the average victim spends \$1500 and 175 hours repairing damages.
- With an average of 10 million victims in the U.S., total costs for repair are \$50 billion.
- The FTC received 255,000 complaints regarding identity theft in 2005.
- Columbia ranks 1st in the state in identity theft followed by Greenville, Charleston, Rock Hill and Myrtle Beach.
- 35% of all identity theft occurs through e-mail, which is the number one method.

About the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs:

Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers. Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit www.sconsumer.gov.

- Someone's identity is stolen every 79 seconds.

The Department will continue to visit the Gaffney community on a regular basis. Locations will be announced monthly. The Department services the entire state via telephone and online help. Specific questions and concerns from the Gaffney community may be addressed to Patty Guthrie. Appointments are available upon request. Ms. Guthrie may be reached at 864.490.3267.

This month's visit has been made possible through a collaborative effort with Cherokee County Administrator Ben Clary and Cherokee County Librarian Cindy Harry.

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