

NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Carri Grube Lybarker, Administrator



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2015 | Release #15-007

Contact: Juliana Harris, 803.734.4296

Vehicle Complaints Take Top Spot in 2014: Nearly \$1 Million to Consumers

Columbia, SC...The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) received **3,908** complaints from January 1, 2014- December 31, 2014, saving consumers nearly **\$1,000,000** in the form of credits, refunds, and adjustments.

The number one complaint category in 2014 was **Vehicle** complaints, totaling 16% (642) of SCDCA's total complaints. Rounding out the top five are **Utilities** at 15% (572), **Debt Collection** at 10% (410), **Credit** at 6% (225), and **Finance** at 5% (214).

The top five consumer refunds were also related to vehicles: (1) Truck replaced after a defect was identified, \$40,358; (2) Vehicle was replaced due to recurring mechanical issue, \$37,590; (3) Vehicle was replaced due to recurring engine misfire, \$33,000; (4) Vehicle was traded in due to structural defect, \$32,000; (5) Vehicle financing problem, \$29,000. "SCDCA staff continues to do a phenomenal job in resolving disputes for SC taxpayers," said Carri Grube Lybarker, Department Administrator. "Our new complaint system has helped to take the provision of these mediation services to the next level."

In January of 2014, SCDCA launched its new online complaint system, making great strides in efficiency. Since implementing the system, the adoption rate has reached 60% and the average time it takes to resolve a complaint has dropped dramatically from 45-55 days to 20-25. One of the first complaints submitted through the online system was resolved within a matter of hours.

Over the past three years, SCDCA has fielded over **14,500** complaints and saved consumers **\$3,344,000** through complaint mediation. To file a complaint, visit www.consumer.sc.gov and click FILE A COMPLAINT. Consumers should also take advantage of the Public Information tool, by researching complaints against businesses before using them.

-end-

03/10/2015-ajh

SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

Connect with us:

