



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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What Consumers Need to Know About Gift Cards

COLUMBIA, S.C. – In the wake of news that Toys R Us is closing, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is encouraging consumers to know their rights when it comes to gift cards.

Though gift cards are viewed as a more personal gift alternative than cash, there are details consumers should consider before spending hard-earned money on them:

- Will the company still be in business? In the case of Toy R Us, consumers have gotten notice that stores are closing. This is not always the case when other stores, especially smaller businesses, close. Consider the health of the business before buying!
- How long will the gift card recipient wait to use their card? Though gift cards can't expire for at least five years, there could be inactivity fees during that time. If the business closes during that period, the consumer will likely not recoup any of their unspent funds.
- Read the disclosures. The law requires businesses to include disclosures in language that consumers can see and understand. Disclosures should clearly display the expiration date as well as any administration or inactivity fees associated with the card.

In the case of Toys R Us, consumers have until April 15 to spend their unused cards. The final word of caution is to spend the remaining balance carefully. Since the store is closing, there will be no returns of unwanted products.

About SCDCA

The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs 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.

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