

NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



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November 7, 2006
Release #06-129
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFTER HOURS SEMINAR HELPS CONSUMERS PROTECT THEIR IDENTITY

Columbia, SC... ..The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs will present a special session of **“After Hours: Identity Theft and Credit Repair.”** The seminar will help consumers protect their identity and repair credit problems. **The special session will be held Saturday, November 11th from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on the first floor of the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs located at 3600 Forest Drive in Columbia.**

“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.
- Someone’s identity is stolen every 79 seconds.

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.sccconsumer.gov.

“Identity Theft and Credit Repair” will also address credit repair issues for all consumers, who may or may not have been victims of identity theft. The seminar will discuss how to obtain a free credit report, dispute incorrect information, and manage your debt. “Some credit repair companies cause consumers more harm than good. Consumers need to know how to repair problems in their credit report without running into additional trouble,” said SCDCA staff attorney Carri Grube.

SCDCA “After Hours” is a monthly public information session held on the third Tuesday of each month. For more information, contact the SCDCA Public Information and Education Division at 803.734.4190 or 803.734.4296, toll-free at 1.800.922.1594 or online at www.sconsumer.gov.

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