

# NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, Administrator

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### “HOMEBUYING 101” – A FREE CONFERENCE FOR CONSUMERS

**Columbia, SC.....**The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) will sponsor its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “Homebuying 101: Building the Foundation for Your American Dream” on Wednesday, June 25. Consumers looking to buy a home as well as business professionals in the industry are encouraged to attend this one-day workshop. The workshop is free and will be held at the Brookland Banquet and Conference Center in West Columbia. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

“Homebuying 101 is an excellent opportunity for consumers to learn the importance of homeownership, the role of the lender, financial and household budgeting techniques, credit issues and the analysis of the credit report in the homebuying process. This seminar will also share tips to prevent consumers from becoming victims of mortgage fraud,” said SCDCA administrator Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston. According to a recent Mortgage Asset Research Institute (MARI) report, South Carolina continues to show significant improvement in reducing mortgage fraud, moving from # 1 in the nation in 2001 to # 22 in 2007. “We still have a responsibility to educate consumers on this important topic,” Pinkston acknowledged.

The conference is being held in conjunction with National Homeownership month. SCDCA would like to thank the conference’s presenting sponsor, the **South Carolina Association of REALTORS®**, as well as cosponsors **SC State Housing Finance and Development Authority**, **Carolina First**, and other public and private sector organizations.

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#### 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.sccoconsumer.gov](http://www.sccoconsumer.gov).

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The conference will provide consumers with a real working knowledge of homeownership. Prior to a panel discussion on government sponsored homebuying products and services, repeating concurrent sessions will allow consumers to attend all three presentations. In **“Credit Reports, Scoring and More”** Donna DeMichael, Staff Attorney and Director of Consumer Services and Education at the Department, will share how to obtain your free credit report, how to read your credit report, what makes up a credit score and other valuable information. **“Credit Counseling in 2008,”** presented by Staff Attorney Carri Grube, will discuss what debt managers, credit repair companies and debt settlement companies can and cannot do under the Consumer Credit Counseling Act. She will also discuss steps consumers can take to improve their credit files. The third session being offered, **“Mortgage Workshop,”** presented by Staff Attorney Charles Knight, will take consumers through the many forms surrounding a home mortgage, including the application, Truth in Lending form and broker fee agreement. Additionally, the session will cover mortgage products and, even more important, show how to detect and defend against mortgage fraud.

Online registration is now available at [www.sccoconsumer.gov](http://www.sccoconsumer.gov) by clicking on the “2008 Homebuying 101 Conference Registration” link. Space is limited, and advance registration is required. For more information, contact the Public Information Division at 803.734.4200 or toll free in SC at 1.800.922.1594.

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