



# NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

*Carri Grube Lybarker, Administrator*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Vehicle Complaints Take Top Spot for the Third Year: Over \$1 Million to Consumers in 2016**

COLUMBIA, S.C. – The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) received **3,913** consumer complaints from January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016, resulting in a total of **\$1,240,705** going back to consumers in the form of credits, refunds, and adjustments.

The number one category in 2016 was **Vehicle** complaints, totaling 16% (697) of SCDCA’s complaints. 2016 is the third year in a row, vehicle complaints took the top spot. The most common vehicle complaints reported were in reference to used vehicles, repairs, and credit sales of motor vehicles. Rounding out the top five are **Utilities** at 13% (515), **Debt Collection** at 8% (317), **Contractors** at 7% (281), and **Finance** at 6% (240).

The top five consumer refunds were related to: (1) forgiveness of medical debt, \$152,700; (2) unconscionable debt collection, \$121,586; (3) cancelation of time share contract due to misrepresentation, \$74,420; (4) misrepresentation of time share contract, \$48,950; (5) cancelation of travel and entertainment package, \$37,800.

“While DCA stands ready and waiting to help consumers resolve issues encountered in the marketplace, we always encourage South Carolinians to be savvy consumers,” said SCDCA’s Administrator Carri Grube Lybarker. “Taking a few up front steps like researching a company before deciding to do business with them and carefully reading a contract before signing can save consumers from major headaches down the line.”

SCDCA processes and mediates consumer complaints against businesses regulated by the DCA, refers complaints that fall within another agency’s jurisdiction, and mediates those complaints against businesses that are unregulated. To file a complaint, visit [www.consumer.sc.gov](http://www.consumer.sc.gov) and click FILE A COMPLAINT. To see if a business has complaints against it, consumers should take advantage of the Search Complaints tool on the Consumer Information page of SCDCA’s website.

### **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](http://www.consumer.sc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-800-922-1594.

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