

# NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, Administrator

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SCDCA Media Contact: Hugh Crofoot, 803.543.8044

1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

Email: [scdca@dca.state.sc.us](mailto:scdca@dca.state.sc.us)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SCDCA RETURNS TO LAURENS ON MAY 15, 2008

**Columbia, SC...** ...The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) will visit the Laurens community on Thursday, May 15, 2008, to handle consumer complaints and questions. Regional SCDCA outreach coordinator Hugh Crofoot will pay a visit to the general conference room at the Laurens County Public Library located at 1017 West Main Street, Laurens, SC 29360. Consumers may come with questions or complaints regarding a business between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. Individuals are encouraged to bring documentation with them.

Mr. Crofoot will also have additional materials on identity theft available upon request. "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.

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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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- 35% of all identity theft occurs through e-mail, which is the number one method.
- Someone's identity is stolen every 79 seconds.

The Department will continue to visit the Laurens community on a regular basis. Locations will be announced monthly. The Department services the entire state via telephone and online help. Specific questions and concerns from the Laurens community may be addressed to Hugh Crofoot. Appointments are available upon request. Mr. Crofoot may be reached at 803.543.8044.

This month's visit has been made possible through a collaborative effort with the Laurens County Public Library and Laurens County Administrator Ernest Segars.

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