

# NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, Administrator

March 19, 2009

Release #09-033

SCDCA Media Contact: Alice Brooks, 803.734.4190

1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

Email: [scdca@scconsumer.gov](mailto:scdca@scconsumer.gov)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Consumer/Business Fraud in the Food Service Industry

**Columbia, SC** – The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs has been contacted by several consumers and food service vendors warning of a scam targeted to the Food Service Industry.

An organization calling itself the South Carolina Food Service Compliance Center, operating out of a mailbox rental center in Columbia, is sending out mass mailings to food service locations in the state. The official looking “Compliance Alert” implies that a “new” law in South Carolina requires a sign to be posted advising employees to wash their hands. The organization further offers to provide these signs at the low cost of only \$19.95 each.

*This is not a new law* and has been in existence for years. However, **no consumer or business has to purchase the hand washing requirement signs**. These signs are provided free by the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control.

This scam is a “retread” and was first reported in South Carolina in 2006. It is also a variation on a scam that Consumer Affairs warned on last year. Small businesses were targeted with mail purporting to be from the US Government requiring that OSHA signs be placed in all employee areas and offering to sell the signs for varying fees. While not illegal, again, business owners could get those signs for free.

For more information on this scam or other consumer issues, contact the Public Information Division at 803.734.4190, toll free in SC at 1.800.922.1594, or online at [www.scconsumer.gov](http://www.scconsumer.gov).

-30-

3-18-08/ajb

---

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

---