

Protect Yourself From Financial Predators

Consumer Protection

Ohio Attorney General's Office



Overview

- Ohio Attorney General's Office
- Consumer Protection Section: Working for You
 - Filing a consumer complaint
 - Scheduling a speaker
- Scams
 - Job scams
 - Foreclosure rescue scams
 - Auto fraud
 - Home improvement scams



Ohio Attorney General's Office



- Attorney General Richard Cordray
 - Ohio's 49th Attorney General
- Duties of the Attorney General
 - Attorney for State of Ohio
 - Enforce laws
 - Support local law enforcement

What is Consumer Protection?

- Consumer transactions:
 - Buying a used car
 - Seeing a store ad
 - Shopping online
 - Filling up on gas
 - Refinancing mortgage
- Consumer Sales Practices Act



Consumer Complaints

- AG complaint resolution process
 - In 2008: 25,261 complaints filed
 - \$3.7 million returned to consumers



Filing a Consumer Complaint

- Visit www.SpeakOutOhio.gov



Scheduling a Speaker

- Go to www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov



Fact or Fiction?

- Recent statistics show that one in every three adults have been the target of a fake check scam.
- **Fact:** According to the Consumer Federation of America, of the one-third that have been targeted, 1.3 million fall victim to the scam.



Job Scams

- Phony job opportunities
- Work at home
- Pyramid schemes
- Get rich quick schemes



Fact or Fiction?

- Paying a foreclosure rescue company can be a wise investment for homeowners who risk losing their homes to foreclosure.
- **Fiction:** Real help is available for *free*. Homeowners shouldn't pay for foreclosure prevention assistance.



Foreclosure Prevention Resources

- Save the Dream (Ohio)
 - (888) 404 - 4674
 - Connect to a housing counselor or legal assistance
- www.MakingHomeAffordable.gov (U.S.)



Foreclosure Rescue Scams

- “We’ll review your loan documents”
- “We have stimulus money for you”
- “Don’t contact your lender”
- “Sell us your house, we’ll rent it back to you”



Foreclosure Rescue Scams

- AGO Action:
 - 23 cease and desist orders issued
 - 10 lawsuits filed
- Advice for homeowners:
 - Stay in your home
 - Contact your lender
 - Call Save the Dream



Fact or Fiction?

- Ohio's Lemon Law applies to motorized vehicles and major household appliances.
- **Fiction:** The Lemon Law applies to motorized vehicles only.



Auto Fraud

- Title Defect Rescission Fund
- “AS IS” means just that.
- Auto Repairs
 - Right to an estimate
 - Approval for additional work



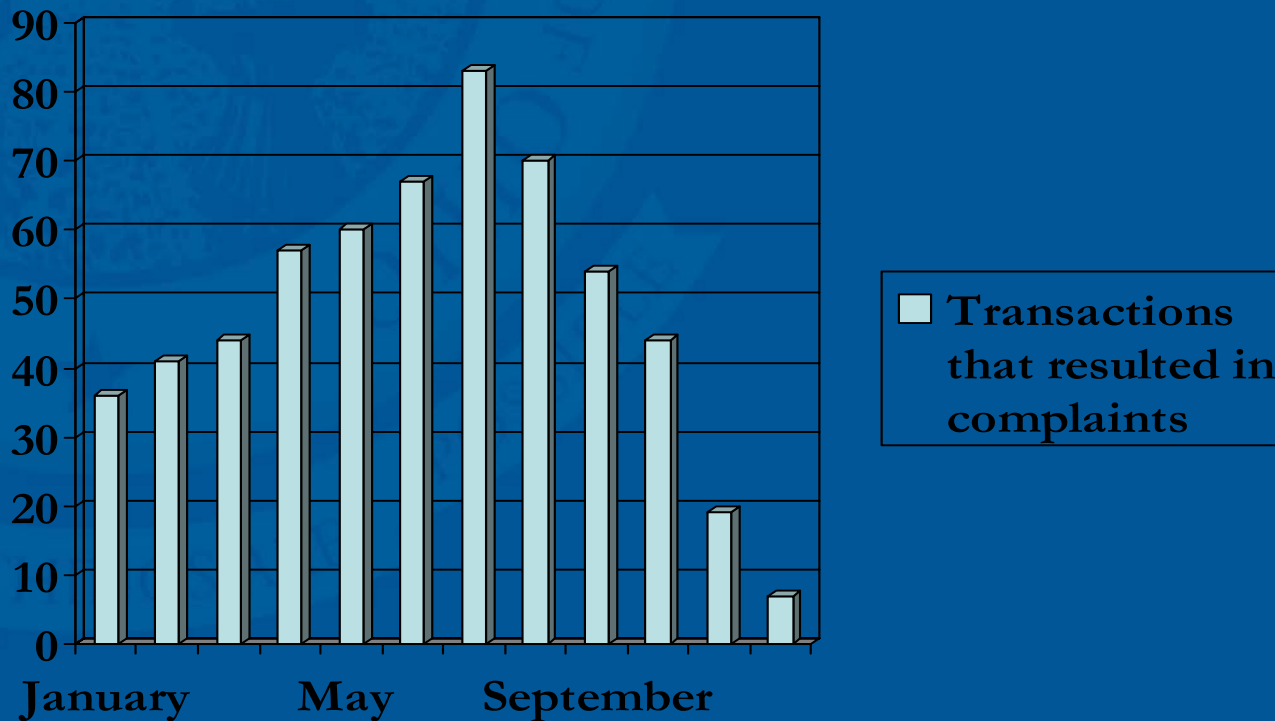
Fact or Fiction?

- Free, door-to-door “roof inspections” are a typical, legitimate business practice.
- **Fiction:** Do not trust home improvement contractors that come to your door unsolicited.

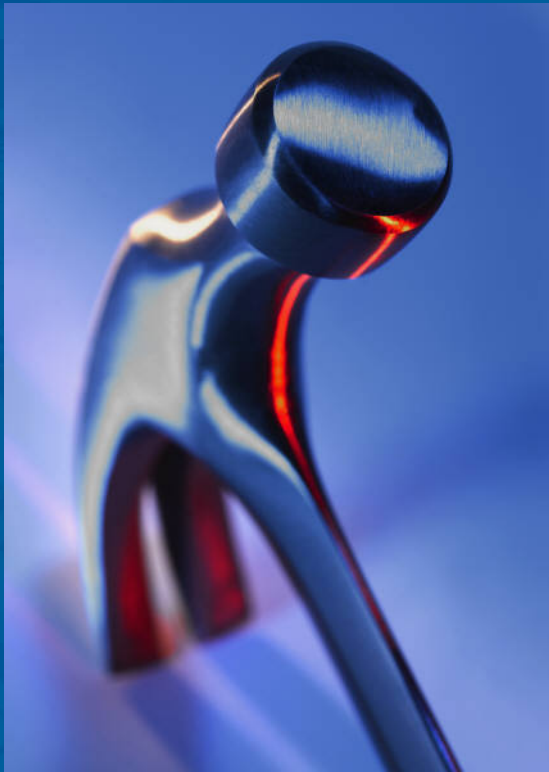


Door-to-Door Sales

- Increase in warmer months (peak: July)
- Transactions resulting in complaints (2008):



Home Improvement Scams



- 6 lawsuits filed this year
 - Failure to deliver
 - Shoddy work
- Avoiding scams
 - Research companies
 - Pay low down payment
 - Get everything in writing
 - Know three-day right to cancel



Researching Companies

- Is it registered? – Secretary of State
 - www.sos.state.oh.us
- Any complaints or lawsuits? – Attorney General
 - www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov
- Is it reliable? - Better Business Bureau
 - www.bbb.org



Additional Resources

- Do Not Call Registry, www.DoNotCall.gov
- Free Credit Report, www.AnnualCreditReport.com

