



CONSUMER NEWS

Office of Consumer Affairs

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TOP TEN Consumer Complaints Reported to the County of Summit Office of Consumer Affairs in 2010

A home improvement contractor who accepts payment and does not return to do the work. A refrigerator that quits working or does not get repaired under the warranty. A vehicle that has been repaired but still does not run correctly. These are just a few of the top issues consumers complained about in 2010, according to the Office of Consumer Affairs whose mission is to educate and protect the citizens of Summit County and those visitors to the county from unfair, deceptive or unconscionable consumer sales practices.

"This year, new to the top ten list were complaints regarding a door-to-door magazine solicitor who accepted payment but failed to deliver the ordered magazines and problems with new or used appliances," said Cynthia Sich Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs. "The release of the top ten complaints each year allows us to remind consumers that if you experience a problem with the purchase of a product or service or see a scam happening, report it to us by calling 330-643-2879, or visit our website at <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/conaffairs.htm> to download a complaint form, learn about our upcoming events, request a speaker, and obtain helpful tips."

In 2010, the top ten complaint areas were:

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| 1. Home Improvements | (Failure to start or complete a job, no 3-day right to cancel, poor workmanship) |
| 2. Appliances | (Defective, failure to replace, verbal misrepresentations regarding sale) |
| 3. Motor Vehicles | (Problems with the purchase or advertisement of new and used vehicles) |
| 4. Foreclosure Prevention | (Foreclosure assistance or services) |
| 5. Magazines/Books | (Failure to deliver or refund money) |
| 6. Warranties | (Not honoring) |
| 7. Landscaping | (Failure to start or complete a job, poor workmanship, failure to refund) |
| 8. Collection Agencies | (Harassing calls, collecting debts not incurred, unwillingness to verify debt) |
| 9. Sweepstakes/Prize Offers | (Deceptive mail, email or telephone solicitations claiming won money) |
| 10. Credit/Debit Cards | (Billing errors, unauthorized charges) |

The Summit County Office of Consumer Affairs' top ten complaint list of 2010 comes from the processing of over 200 complaints through its complaint mediation and investigation programs that returned \$18,772 to consumers in the form of refunds, exchanges, repair or replacement of products. Six homeowners received loan modifications resulting in a combined savings of \$203,961. Additionally, over 1,500 consumers attended one of the many consumer protection presentations, budget classes or Surviving the Economy clinics offered throughout the year, while the office's website recorded 38,621 page views (number of times a page was viewed by visitor.)