

Better Business Bureau's Five Worst Rated Businesses of 2016

These five businesses generated the most unresolved and unanswered complaints in 2016

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) has announced the annual list of the Five Worst Rated Businesses in the 20 counties of the Southern Piedmont for 2016. These five companies, all with "F" ratings, have earned that designation due to their lack of response to their customer's complaints. BBB worked to resolve 14,900 complaints in 2016 and these companies stood out due to their unwillingness to address the concerns of their customers.

Fortunately, the vast majority of businesses work very closely with BBB...they understand the value of excellent customer service and a high rating from BBB. BBB was able to resolve a record 93% of complaints in 2016. However, there are a few companies that don't have that same goal in mind.

The five companies with the lowest BBB ratings due to their failure to respond to their customer's complaints in 2016 are:

1) MS-Squad Complainants allege that the company misrepresented itself as "Microsoft Network Security" and told them that their computers had a virus. Complainants allege that the company then sold them a "lifetime security package" for \$499.99. If they didn't purchase it, alerts popped up on their computer monitors with sirens and an emergency telephone number that, when called, demanded payment of \$249.99. Ten unanswered/unresolved complaints in 2016.

2) Flat Rate Movers Owner Desi Zerpa is connected to another moving company, Metro Move. Complainants allege that movers damaged their furniture, damaged their homes, or would not deliver their furnishings unless additional money was paid. Nine unanswered/unresolved complaints in 2016.

3) All South Paving Complainants allege that they paid the company to pave their driveways and the company either did not perform or complete the job or did poor quality work. Eight unanswered/unresolved complaints in 2016.

4) AFSCO Complainants allege that they received phone calls stating that they owed a debt which must be paid immediately or they would be arrested. Seven unanswered/unresolved complaints in 2016.

5) Carolina Pack and Load Complainants allege that movers kept their belongings and will not return calls or that the movers damaged their furniture and would not pay for damages. Six unanswered/unresolved complaints in 2016.

The BBB encourages consumers to check out a business before doing business with them at bbb.org.

State Fire Marshal Supports First Responder Bill

Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey has announced his support of new legislation that gives property tax relief to spouses of first responders killed in the line of duty.

"I enthusiastically support this bill and will always do all that I can to aid and assist our veterans, firefighters, search and rescue and emergency medical personnel," said Causey. "I applaud the sponsors of this bill and look forward to working with them in our quest to provide much-needed support for our brave men and women who give so much to our communities."

Tax relief will be provided to the surviving spouse of responders who lost their life in the line of duty.

The primary sponsors of the First Responder Bill are House Appropriations Senior Chairman Nelson Dollar and Representatives Jason Saine, Jon Hardister and Rena Turner.

"We are honored to have the State Fire Marshal's support for this legislation and deeply appreciate Commissioner Causey's commitment to our veterans, fire and rescue personnel and first responders," said Rep. Nelson Dollar, R-Wake.

For the full bill visit www.ncleg.net.

Donate on Line 30 of N.C. State Income Tax Form to Conserve Wildlife

It's tax season again and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission is asking taxpayers to help conserve the state's nongame and rare wildlife species by donating to the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Fund. By donating a portion of their state tax refund on line 30 of their state income tax form, wildlife enthusiasts will help fund projects that conserve nongame wildlife - birds, mammals, fish, mollusks, reptiles, amphibians and crayfish without a designated hunting or fishing season. Although tax check-off donations target projects benefiting nongame animals and their habitats, game species such as deer, turkey and bear also benefit because they live in many of these same habitats.

Since the fund's inception in 1984, taxpayers have donated nearly \$11 million to projects such as:

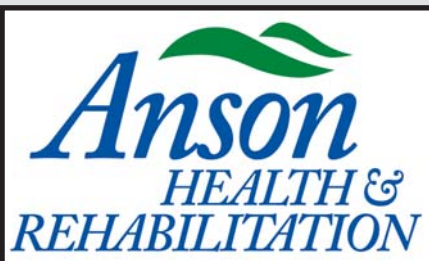
- Restoring wetlands on the Sandhills Game Land to help increase populations of gopher frogs, tiger salamanders and other pond-breeding amphibians;
- Erecting towers in Black Mountain to provide roosting sites for thousands of chimney swifts in the fall; and,
- Conducting mist-netting surveys of bats in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain to learn more about the abundance and distribution of bats, as well as the prevalence of white-nose syndrome in these areas.

Donations make up the largest and most significant source of non-federal funding to help these animals, so donations - no matter how small - are critical to the continuation of many projects.

Tax season isn't the only time or way to contribute to wildlife conservation. Other ways to help North Carolina's wildlife and their habitats year-round are:

- Registering a vehicle or trailer with a N.C. Wildlife Conservation license plate;
- Donating online at www.ncwildlife.org/give;

More information about the Wildlife Diversity Program, including projects and quarterly reports, is available on the Commission's website www.ncwildlife.org.



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