

Garage sales, flea markets, consignment stores, pawn shops, online stores and websites all offer easy ways to buy, sell and give away second-hand products. They let sellers recycle unwanted items and buyers save money. But some second-hand items, like many children’s products, carry risks and legal penalties that both buyers and sellers must be aware of. By law, you cannot import, sell, distribute, or even lend or give away products that do not meet the requirements of the *Hazardous Products Act*, which is administered by Health Canada. If you do, you could be liable in a civil court of law.

Second-hand Products & Garage Sales



Selling, Buying or Borrowing... Think Safety!

- Check for recalls on products before you buy, sell, lend or give them away.
- Only buy, sell, lend or give away items that are in good condition.
- Read the label and make sure instructions come with the item.
- Ask questions about the product’s age and history of use.
- Contact the manufacturer or check Health Canada’s consumer product recalls (healthcanada.gc.ca/cps-recalls) to make sure the product has not been banned or recalled.
- Throw away damaged or banned items.

baby gates, walkers, balloons, bath seats, batteries, barbecues, blinds, booster seats, carriages, strollers, curtain cords, bunk beds, candles, car seats, change tables, clothing, cleaning products, cosmetics, cribs, electrical appliances, helmets, household products, hot tubs, lighters, matches, mattresses, pacifiers, pesticides, plastic bags, playpens, tents, toys

Learn about which products are banned and which have special safety requirements

Facts for Garage Sale Vendors - provides a list of products that must meet safety requirements before they can be sold or given away. For complete information, go to the Safe Consumers website at: www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/consumer

Advisories, Warnings and Recalls

Health Canada helps protect the Canadian public from potential health hazards by posting advisories, warnings and recalls about consumer products. Their website also has information on what to do if you have concerns about a product and what to do if a product has been recalled. For more information, contact Consumer Product Safety, Health Canada: 1.866.662-0666, email: cps-spc@hc-sc.gc.ca, or visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cps. In Saskatchewan, contact Patricia Lewis, Product Safety Officer, at: 306.975-4028 or email: patricia.lewis@hc-sc.gc.ca.



SaskWatch - Summer 2011

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Published quarterly

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Consumer Association of Saskatchewan, active since 1947, is a non-profit, volunteer-driven association committed to fairness in the marketplace and improving the quality of life for consumers.

Through information and education, CASK assists consumers make wise use of personal resources and represents the consumer interest in marketplace issues with business and governments.

CASK Board of Directors 2011-2012

President: Audrey Findlay
Past President: Maura Gillis-Cipywnyk
Secretary: Ruth Robinson
Treasurer: Nancy Kulbida

Members-at-Large:

Mary L. Glauser
Jean Nahachewsky

Year in Review

Our Board of Directors and other CASK volunteers have been busy this year working on various committees, and attending meetings, conferences and focus groups - as we continue to lobby for fairness in the marketplace and improve the quality of life for consumers.

The Board is pleased to announce its name change from the former Consumers' Association of Canada (Saskatchewan Branch) Inc. to Consumer Association of Saskatchewan Inc.

Along with the new name, we have completed the re-design of our website and added the use of a blog in our endeavours to increase the means to network with consumers throughout our province. It is the Board's goal to revitalize CASK's membership at large by introducing a vibrant and interactive website and to provide a medium by which consumers can channel their opinions, concerns, and questions, as well as network with fellow

consumers on related topics of consumer interests.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to retiring board members: Burna Purkin and John Costa, especially for their input into our new website; Jackie Lindgren, for her excellent work as treasurer; and Tom Rogers, for his enthusiasm and input throughout the year.

The Board gratefully acknowledges the guidance, insights and diligence provided by: Maura Gillis-Cipywnyk, past president; Ruth Robinson, secretary; and Board members Mary Glauser and Jean Nahachewsky. I look forward to the coming year and working on some challenging projects with them. Many thanks to Annemarie Buchmann-Gerber who continues to provide excellent assistance to consumers and Board alike, and to Brenda Goldsworthy, editor of *SaskWatch*, for her highly professional work.

Audrey Findlay, President

Annual General Meeting

Consumer Association of Saskatchewan held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Saskatoon on May 30th. Guests included Sask. Justice Minister and Attorney General Don Morgan, Deputy Director of Saskatchewan's Consumer Protection Branch, Larry Wilson, and keynote speaker, Patricia Lewis, Product Safety Officer with Health Canada's Consumer Safety Branch. Mr. Morgan presented CASK with its annual grant with a much appreciated increase, and spoke briefly on recent consumer issues, including *The Ticket Sales Act* (see pg. 3). Ms. Lewis gave an informative power point presentation on *The New Canada Consumer Product Safety Act*, discussed different products that have been recalled and banned, and encouraged everyone to

check their website frequently (www.hc-sc.gc.ca), as it's updated on a daily basis.

The AGM concluded with nominations and election of the New Board of Directors for 2011/2012.

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Health Fraud - Ensuring Truth in Advertising



Combating health fraud is a priority for the federal government's Competition Bureau. Bogus weight-loss schemes, cure-all scams, or products claiming amazing health effects are some of the many areas of health fraud targeted by the Bureau.

Their website includes information on *Health Fraud Prevention*, *Ensuring Truth in Advertising*, *Preventing Abuse of Market Power*, and their *Frequently Asked Questions*. The section on *Enquiries and Complaints* details how to submit a complaint or an enquiry and what options are available to help file a complaint.

Fraud Awareness for Commercial Targets (FACT)

The FACT campaign is an initiative of the Bureau that provides businesses, not-for-profit organizations and charities with the facts necessary to avoid becoming victims of fraud, which costs them millions of dollars

each year. Criminals know how to appear organized, courteous and professional because they know that it's this 'apparent legitimacy' that makes thousands of organizations fall prey to scams every year, ordering goods from fraudulent vendors and then paying for services they never get.

Scam Techniques, *What Makes Your Organization Vulnerable*, *Spotting Phoney Emails*, and *Building an Anti-Fraud Plan* are some of the areas covered on their website to help organizations avoid becoming victims of fraud.

Web: competitionbureau.gc.ca

Phone toll-free: 1-800-348-5358

Canada Moving to Digital Television: August 31, 2011

The CRTC has set a deadline of August 31, 2011 for the full transition from analog to digital TV signals. Converting to digital frees up parts of airwaves that will be used for advanced wireless and public safety services for police and fire departments, and other im-

portant services to benefit Canadians. For you, the viewer, digital TV means sharper pictures and better sound. You may need extra equipment, depending on the type of television you have and how you receive your TV signals. If you receive your TV signals by

cable, satellite or another TV service, the switch to digital will not affect you. You will continue to receive your existing television services with the equipment you have. If you use an outside antenna or 'rabbit ears' you'll need a digital converter box, a tele-

vision with a digital tuner or you could consider getting your TV services from a cable, satellite or other service provider.

For more information on the transition to digital television, check out the website: digitaltv.gc.ca or contact your local TV station.

New Law Governing Ticket Sales in Saskatchewan

Legislation to protect Saskatchewan consumers by regulating the sale of event tickets came into force on June 1, 2011. Its primary objective is to prevent ticket resellers from acquiring tickets to major sporting and entertainment events before they go on sale to the general public, and to permit 'local' residents to have the first opportunity to purchase event tickets.

Under the legislation, primary ticket sellers will not be allowed to have links to reseller websites on their websites. In addition, ticket sellers will be prohibited from selling outside a certain geographical region for the first hour to ensure residents from Saskatchewan and neighbouring provinces and states have a fair chance to purchase a ticket. The Act will also make it illegal to use computer software to automatically buy tickets.

The Minister of Justice and Attorney General Don

Morgan said, "I am confident that *The Ticket Sales Act* and its regulations will provide a good balance between consumer protection and maintenance of a healthy industry."

For more information, phone: 306.787-8959

Website: www.justice.gov.sk.ca/cpb

Information for Consumers

The Consumer Protection Branch of the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General provides information on how to protect yourself within the marketplace. Go to: www.justice.gov.sk.ca to learn more about your rights and responsibilities as a consumer and to access important information about how to make wise buying decisions, how to identify frauds and scams, and how to make a complaint.



Saskatchewan Open Door Society

Open Door is an organization dedicated to offering support and providing services for immigrants and refugees in the areas of settlement and integration, language training and employment. A large volunteer component complements the work of the Open Door staff. With support, newcomers feel more welcome, improve their language skills, experience less stress, and adapt more easily to their new life in Saskatchewan and Canada. For more information, or to volunteer, contact the Regina or Saskatoon offices.

Regina Open Door Society Ph: 352-3500

Email: recept@rods.sk.ca Web: www.rods.sk.ca

Saskatoon Open Door Society Ph: 653-4464

Email: skopendoor@sods.sk.ca

Web: www.sods.sk.ca

Newcomer Information Centre

How do I use the bus? Where do I get a health card? Where do I get a social insurance number? Where do I go when my child is sick? How do I get my child enrolled in school? These are just some of the many questions facing newcomers to Saskatchewan. The Newcomer Information Centre provides basic information on a variety of day-to-day needs facing newcomers so they don't have to go from agency to agency looking for information. The Centre is a partnership of Saskatoon Open Door Society, Global Gathering Place, International Women of Saskatoon and the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association. More info: 306.343-8303; email: info.nic@sasktel.net; web: nicstoon.org/

Mosquito Repellent

- Take a daily B-complex vitamin. Mosquitoes find it distasteful.
- Essential oils known for repelling insects are cinnamon, citronella, clove, lemon eucalyptus, lemongrass, lavender, peppermint, eucalyptus, thyme, geranium, spearmint and rosemary. Dilute 10 drops of essential oil (try one or several combined) in 2 tablespoons of alcohol or a carrier oil like almond, coconut or olive oil.
- Mosquito bites can be eased by wetting the skin and rubbing an aspirin over the spot.

Is Your Fridge Living in the Past?

SaskPower's Refrigerator Recycling program is back by popular demand. They'll pay you \$50 for each old fridge or freezer (maximum four) and even pick them up ... and they'll recycle them responsibly, as well. You'll save money by using less power, and help protect the environment. This offer is available for a limited time so call early. Details at: saskpower.com/save_power/refrigerator_recycling/

Don't Move Firewood

Moving firewood, even a few kilometers, can spread invasive insects and diseases to our forests. A single piece of infected firewood can *destroy millions of trees* and all it takes is one harmful pest - you never know what might be hiding in or under the bark. The impact is far-reaching and can cause widespread damage. It can cause trees to disappear from our forests, cities, streets and parks. This can affect air and water quality. It can deprive citizens of shade and animals of habitat while damaging private property and reducing land value. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency plays an important role in protecting Canada's plant resource base from invasive pests and diseases. For more information: 1.800.442-2342; Web: inspection.gc.ca.

Saskatchewan Seniors' Gold Plan

Benefits available to Saskatchewan residents 65 years of age and older include:

- Free provincial park entry (all people travelling in a passenger vehicle with a senior will also receive free entry to provincial parks).
- Free fishing licences.
- 30% discount on fares from Saskatchewan Transportation Company.
- Free non-driver photo ID from Saskatchewan Government Insurance.

For details, visit the Saskatchewan Health website: health.gov.sk.ca or call toll-free: 1.800.667-7766.

10-Second Workout

Whenever you remember, squeeze your belly and/or butt. The more you do it, the more you think of it - and the tighter those muscles will get.

Product Safety

Knowing how to use products correctly, reading instructions, and being alert to hazards will help keep you safe. You should also pay attention to product recalls in the news and consumer magazines. The Government of Canada provides a website (www.healthycanadians.ca) where consumers can search for information about food and children's products that are unsafe or unhealthy and have been recalled. For questions or concerns related to food safety, including to report a potential food safety incident, contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at: www.inspection.gc.ca.

Driver's Licence Good for 5 Years

Saskatchewan has moved to a new one-part driver's licence that only has to be renewed every five years. Several security features accompany the new licences including a laser engraving and a high quality photo. Customers can pay either \$100 to renew for five years, or opt to continue paying \$25 each year. During the transition period, the renewal term will vary between 1 to 5 years based on the expiry date of the driver's current photo identification card. For more information, phone: 306.751-1837.

Age-friendly Saskatoon ...

How do we Rate?

The Council on Aging invites you to share your views in a survey on what would make Saskatoon an age-friendly place to live, now and into the future. The survey takes about 30 minutes to complete. Results are confidential and anonymous. There are three options for completing the survey. For specific information on completing the survey call the Council at: 652-2255.

Gastronomic Pornography

There is an obesity wave amongst children - and no wonder. The average American child sees roughly 10,000 food ads annually. Food on television makes one think about eating and gets one's gastric juices flowing, triggering the release of insulin, lowering one's blood sugar and stimulating food cravings. It's gastronomic pornography.

Mosquitoes Are Back

The weather is warm and that means mosquitoes are back. Rain and warm weather provide ideal conditions for mosquitoes. To decrease the mosquito population and reduce the risk of West Nile virus, City crews are monitoring mosquito development sites and treating them when larvae are found. The adult mosquito population is also being monitored to track the presence of West Nile virus. You can help by removing standing water from property and ensuring your yard and property, including eaves troughs, are water-free. Protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites and reduce the risk of West Nile virus by using insect repellent appropriately, using mosquito nets, and wearing light coloured clothing. And consider staying indoors during the evening hours when mosquitoes are most active.

More info: www.saskatoon.ca or call 975-3300.

Did You Know ...

- There are over 12,000 ancient teepee rings in the Grasslands National Park in southern Saskatchewan. (*from Parks Canada website*)
- Canada has more lakes than any other country in the world.
- The longest street in the world is Yonge street in Toronto measuring 1,178 miles.
- The names of all continents both start and end with the same letter.
- The 3 most common languages in the world are Mandarin Chinese, Spanish and English.
- Months that start on a Sunday will always have a Friday the 13th.
- The most commonly used letter in the English alphabet is E; the least used one is Q.
- Americans throw away 44 million newspapers a day.
- The US produces 19% of the world's trash.
- It takes a plastic container over 50,000 years to start decomposing.
- Recycling one glass jar saves enough energy to watch TV for 3 hours.
- The Amazon rainforest produces half the world's oxygen supply.
- The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls froze over completely.

Consumers Council of Canada

The Consumers Council of Canada is an independent, not-for-profit organization working to improve the marketplace for consumers. The Council brings with it many years of hands-on consumer advocacy experience with a wealth of expertise in developing policies in co-operation with business and government that improve the marketplace for everyone.

The Council builds consumer networks to support its understanding and advocacy around issues it engages and, as such, is an active participant in the *Canadian Consumer Initiative*. They often lead in addressing emerging areas of consumer concern, such as nanotechnology and work to improve con-

sumer understanding and actual experience in marketplaces and issues important to everyday life. The Council has advocated around energy prices and conservation, home construction quality, health care, product safety, point-of-sale practices, advertising standards, and corporate social responsibility, to name a few issue areas.

Consumers Council of Canada is seeking new members with expertise and a personal, professional or academic interest in electronic payments, reward systems, telecommunications, broadcasting, new media and electronic commerce, sustainable consumption, consumer complaints handling and health and food safety. Members

will be invited to participate in policy development and consumer representation activities and be eligible to serve on the Council's Issues Committees or seek election to the Council's Board of Directors.

The Young Consumers Network is a volunteer group of Canadians aged 18 to 35, of diverse backgrounds, that meet online to discuss current marketplace issues. The Young Consumers Network offers young Canadians:

- Online discussion of consumer issues and an opportunity to voice their opinions to other Network participants and to the Council and their professional advisers.
- Invitations to selected Network and Council activities.
- Earned opportunities to participate in Network governance and planning.
- Internship opportunities with the Consumers Council.

Phone: (416) 483-2696

Email: info@consumerscouncil.com

Web: consumerscouncil.com/



Regina (924-0236) **Computers For Kids** (934-0585) Saskatoon

Computers for Kids is a registered charity dedicated to transforming unwanted computers into educational tools for children in need. Founded in Windsor, Ontario in 2004, they've made individual placements of computers that are benefiting thousands of special needs youth and have helped divert over 2.5 million pounds of electronic waste from area landfills.

What is E-Waste? Electronic Waste, E-Waste, E-Scrap, or Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) describes discarded, surplus, obsolete, broken, electrical or electronic devices. E-waste contains a number of very serious contaminants such as lead,

cadmium, beryllium, and brominated flame retardants. It also contains a number of valuable materials, including copper, steel, plastics, etc.

Why Donate your E-Waste to *Computers for Kids*?

There is a rapidly growing problem of young people falling behind in school because they lack access to computer technology away from school. There are other organizations that will accept your unwanted electronic waste, but by giving to *Computers for Kids*, you are helping to ensure that no child falls behind because they don't have access to computer technology away from school.

Common Fraud and Scam Complaints

The Ombudsman for Banking Services and Investments (OBSI) is an independent service for resolving banking services and investment disputes. Their services are free to consumers. Typical product or service complaints are: debit and credit card fraud; mortgage prepayment penalties; suitability of investment advice; and transaction disputes.

OBSI most frequently sees the following fraud and scam-related complaints:

Debit and credit card fraud:

Keep your cards in a safe place, use different PIN numbers for each card, don't share your card and PIN, cover the PIN-pad when using, and don't ever write your PIN on the card or leave your written PIN in your wallet.

Overpayment scams: You advertise something for sale and the buyer writes you a cheque for too much money. He asks you to return the overpayment by sending a wire. By the time the original cheque is discovered to be counter-

feit, the "buyer" and your money have disappeared.

Debt consolidation scams: Someone whose credit limit is stretched to the max, and has multiple debts, will pay a company a fee for debt



consolidation at a lower rate. In return, this person receives a cheque to clear the original debts. The cheque is deposited to a bank account and existing debts are paid off from the proceeds. It is not until the consolidation cheque later turns out to be counterfeit that the scam is discovered. The unfortunate victim now has an even bigger debt problem. Always deal with a reputable company

Fraudulent investments: If you're offered a special deal on an investment "for you only", or "guaranteed high returns", watch out! If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Buy your investments from licensed investment advisors working with regulated firms.

Identity theft: If criminals get their hands on your personal and financial information they can open bank accounts, get credit cards and borrow money – all in your name. Safely store important financial and personal documents, and shred those you no longer need.

OBSI reminds all Canadians to remain vigilant against criminals throughout the year. "*Criminals and scam artists are always on the lookout for ways to part you from your money,*" said Ombudsman Doug Melville. "*To be forewarned is to be forearmed.*"

Toll free: 1.888.451-4519

Email: publicaffairs@obsi.ca

Website: www.obsi.ca

85% of Saskatchewan Kids Don't Meet National Guidelines For Physical Activity

For the first time in history, children are expected to have a shorter and less healthy life than their parents because they're not getting enough physical activity for optimal growth and development.

Saskatchewan in Motion, a province-wide movement of schools, communities and leaders committed to raising the grade of physical activity for children and youth, has launched the Daily Physical Activity (DFA) Manual in consultation with provincial education leaders, and in response to requests from teachers for ways to implement

daily physical activity into their classrooms.

"We realize that teachers are busy enough with the demands of a regular school day," said Graham Richardson with Saskatchewan in Motion, "so we wanted to create a tool that provided easy ideas on how to insert physical activity into any part of the day. Youth spend so much time at school, so for them to be able to be active and work towards receiving 60 to 90 minutes of physical activity at their school goes a long way towards making them as healthy as they can be," Richardson said.

Provincial Disaster Assistance Program

The Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) provides financial assistance in specific circumstances where there has been a natural disaster, such as: flooding, tornados, plow winds and severe weather. The program provides assistance to eligible claimants in a municipality that has been designated as a result of substantial loss or damage caused by a natural disaster to uninsurable, essential property.

Municipalities serve as the access point for residents seeking assistance. Program staff work with municipal offices and resi-

dents, and assist in making applications to the program. The program is cost-shared with each claimant, using a formula to determine the percentage of loss recoverable.

The PDAP does not compete with private insurers, or provide full compensation for substantial losses or damage to property. It does not provide financial assistance for drought losses, fire losses or fire-related costs.

Some examples of eligible items under PDAP include: clean-up, essential household items, structural repair and restoration,

and preventative measures taken during the disaster.

In March 2011, the provincial government announced improvements to PDAP to assist individuals and businesses affected by severe weather that had struck several locations around the province. Besides homeowners, small businesses, agricultural enterprises, charitable and non-profit organizations, boards, park authorities and local government authorities may be eligible for PDAP assistance. More info at: cpsp.gov.sk.ca/pdap. Toll Free: 1.866.632-4033 or 306.787-7800.

If you need a Birth, Death or Marriage Certificate, purchase one directly from the Department of Vital Statistics. There are many official looking sites on the web selling these services, but charging **three times as much** as getting them directly from Vital Statistics. Phone: 306.798-0641 for more information.



As Always - Buyer Beware!

Do your homework before making any purchases. If you experience a problem in the marketplace, if you want to check into a product prior to purchasing, or if you need information on your rights and responsibilities in the marketplace, contact CASK at: 306.242-4090.

Membership / Subscription

- I'd like a one-year CASK membership (includes a one-year subscription to *SaskWatch*) \$ 25.00
 - I'd like a one-year subscription to *SaskWatch* (4 issues) \$ 10.00
 - I'd like to make a donation of \$ _____ \$ _____
- Total enclosed: (*make cheques payable to Consumer Association of Saskatchewan*) \$ _____

I would like to become a CASK volunteer. I am interested in volunteering in the following areas:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Street: _____ City: _____ Code: _____

Email: _____

Renewal Notice:

Your membership expiry date is on the top of your address label. We hope you will renew your membership.

Making a donation to CASK will help us continue to lobby for fairness in the marketplace and improve the quality of life for consumers