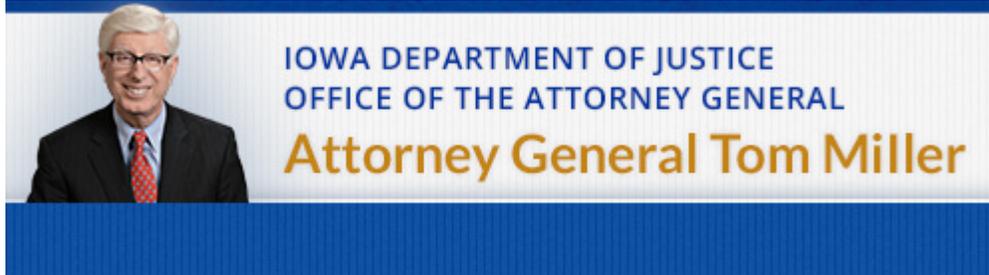


[Skip to main content](#)



[Main Content](#)

February 23, 2018

Home Improvement Problems, Imposter Scams Top 2017 Consumer Complaint List

While imposter scams are second on list of written complaints, thousands more report being targeted

(DES MOINES, Iowa) Home improvement troubles topped the list of complaints consumers filed with the Consumer Protection Division in 2017, and imposter scams jumped to number two.

Out of approximately 2,961 written complaints filed in 2017, 224 related to home improvements.

While imposter scams are second on the list for written complaints at 161, thousands more consumers contacted the Consumer Protection Division to report the scams but did not file complaints.

Imposter scams, which generally occur through phone calls or emails, involve someone who pretends to be someone they're not, and the scammer seeks immediate payment. Imposters make wide-ranging fake claims, including IRS agents collecting overdue tax payments, relatives who need money for an emergency, people who seek processing fees for prize winnings, or long-distance companions who need cash.

"Imposter scams are by far what Iowans report the most—these calls come in every day," Attorney General Tom Miller said. "Don't wire money or provide money card or gift card numbers to anyone over the phone who wants you to pay now," Miller added. "Scammers spoof caller-ID displays, so you simply can't trust caller-ID information." Miller urges Iowans to hang up when receiving such a call. Seek advice from a trusted source, or if you're unsure about a caller's claim, verify it by calling a known number of the supposed source—for example, if the caller claims to be an IRS agent, call the number the IRS lists on its website and not the number that may appear on your caller-id display.

Internet service providers and internet/media bundles rounded out the top three complaints at 136.

2017 TOP TEN CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION COMPLAINTS

Category	Complaints
1. Home improvements	224
2. Imposter scams	161
3. Internet service providers and bundles	136
4. Payday loans	127
5. Motor vehicle credit	122
6. Cell phones	120
7. Auto repairs	107
8. Debt collection	103
9. Insurance	102
10. Used vehicle sales practices	100
Total written consumer complaints:	2,961

Consumers with questions or complaints can contact the Consumer Protection Division through the Attorney General's website, by email or by phone:

Website: www.iowaAttorneyGeneral.gov

Email: consumer@ag.iowa.gov

Phone: 515-281-5926 (outside the Des Moines area, call toll-free: 888-777-4590)

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[« Back](#)