

COMPLAINT RESOURCES

General Complaints and Questions (Sales, Warranties, Misrepresentations, etc.)

Mobilehome Ombudsman: 1-800-952-5275 (TDD: 1-800-735-2929);

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/ol/ombpg-menu.html>;
Post Office Box 31, Sacramento, CA 95812-0031

Escrow Complaints

Department of Corporations;
Financial Services Division;
320 West 4th Street, Suite 750;
Los Angeles, California 90013-2344
(213) 576-6201 or 1-(800) 347-6995 (in CA).
<http://www.corp.ca.gov/fsd/financial.htm>

Contractor Complaints:

Contractors State License Board
(800) 321-CSLB (2752)
<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/consumers/infocomplaint.asp>

Building Permits for Alterations

HCD Northern Area Office (north of Fresno Co.)
8911 Folsom Blvd
Sacramento, CA 95826
Tel. (916) 255-2501
Fax: (916) 255-2535
HCD Southern Area Office (Fresno Co. & south)
3737 Main Street, Ste. 400
Riverside, CA 92501
Tel. (909) 782-4420
Fax (909) 782-4437

Registration & Titling of Manuf. Homes

HCD-Registration & Titling
P.O. Box 2111
Sacramento, CA 95812-2111
1-800-952-8356
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/rt/>

DIVISION OF CODES & STANDARDS

MISSION STATEMENT

To effectively and efficiently develop and administer California laws and regulations providing for health, safety, affordability, ownership security and consumer protection in housing.



DIVISION OF CODES AND STANDARDS

1800 THIRD STREET, SUITE 260, P.O. BOX 1407
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-1407

(916) 445-9471 FAX (916) 327-4712

From TDD Phones 1 (800) 735-2929

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov>

10/10/02

THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



INFORMATION ON MANUFACTURED HOME SALES AND REPAIRS

Department of Housing and Community Development



State of California

Gray Davis, Governor

Maria Contreras-Sweet, Secretary,

Business Transportation and Housing

Julie Bornstein, Director, HCD



Manufactured Homes: A Safe and Affordable Housing Option

Manufactured homes are used throughout the State, in mobilehome parks or communities, on parcels in rural areas, and as “in-fill” housing in urban neighborhoods. Unlike conventional wood-frame houses, special federal and state laws regulate the construction, alteration, sale, and maintenance of manufactured homes.

Special federal rules govern the construction of manufactured homes, although fire sprinklers standards are set by state law. State rules govern the conduct of manufactured home dealers and salespersons, including escrow requirements to protect purchasers. Alterations and repairs of manufactured homes also generally require special permits from a state agency, the Department of Housing and Community Development.

Other State departments can provide assistance with regard to certain problems. This pamphlet identifies some common questions and answers, and provides references to state agencies most likely able to assist with these housing problems. Complaints also can be made to the local district attorney or can be handled as a civil matter with private attorneys.

Health and Safety (HSC) Code Section 50007.5: “The Legislature finds and declares that manufactured housing, by virtue of its production costs and sales prices, can provide a source of decent, safe, and affordable shelter and...[HCD] shall encourage increased availability and affordability of manufactured housing....

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Are manufactured housing buyers or owners more susceptible to fraudulent practices?

A. No. Like with any product, there are persons who take advantage of people who are not careful or not aware of their rights. All consumers buying or using expensive products like homes should be aware of their legal rights and obligations. Manufactured home dealers and salespersons are licensed after passing exams and preliminary education requirements; work should be performed by qualified and licensed professionals, and proper permits obtained where necessary.

Q. Is there a central place to call with questions about manufactured home problems and issues?

A. In California, the Legislature established the Office of the Mobilehome Ombudsman within HCD. It assists the public to resolve manufactured home and mobilehome problems by taking complaints and coordinating their resolution. Issues handled by this office include titling and registration, installation, warranties, sales, inspection of homes and parks, mobilehome accessories, and certain Mobilehome Residency Law questions. The office has a toll-free number, 1-800-952-5275 (TDD: 1-800-735-2929), or can be contact by writing: Post Office Box 31, Sacramento, CA 95812-0031 or through the website at www.hcd.ca.gov/codes/ol/ombpg-menu.html.

Q. Are the rules for buying manufactured homes the same as buying conventional housing?

A. No, special state laws and regulations govern the conduct of manufactured home dealers and salespersons. They also provide specific requirements regarding purchase documents, warranties for repairs after installation, and escrow documents and procedures. If you believe that you have been treated improperly by a manufactured home dealer or salesperson, you can contact the Mobilehome Ombudsman with your concerns.

Q. What about problems with the installation of the home.

A. Generally, installation is part of the sales transaction. However, the work must be done by a licensed contractor. If the installation is not correct, contact the installer and/or the dealer (if the dealer arranged installation), the Mobilehome Ombudsman, and the Contractors State License Board.

Q. What if the home has defects after installation?

A. State and federal laws make both the dealer and the manufacturer jointly liable for warranty compliance to correct defects in the home. The sales documents provide information on how to obtain repairs for these defects. If the dealer or manufacturer refuses to make repairs after following those procedures, contact the Mobilehome Ombudsman regarding these concerns.

Q. What if the escrow company refuses to perform its obligations correctly?

A. The California Department of Corporations licenses escrow companies. However, complaints can be made to the Mobilehome Ombudsman, who will forward them to the Department of Corporations if the staff determines that the escrow company may be at fault for the problem.

Q. What if I need alterations, improvements, or repairs to my manufactured home?

A. Repairs of “like-kind” generally do not need permits, but persons hired to make these repairs usually must use materials and accessories designed for manufactured housing. Alterations, ranging from cabanas (“additional rooms”) or new fireplaces, require special state building permits and inspections that the owner or contractor must obtain from HCD’s local area office. Improper work by a licensed contractor can be reported to the Mobilehome Ombudsman or directly to the Contractors State License Board.