

# **Consumer Protection**

*This weekly column is prepared by the Consumer Protection Service of the Alaska Attorney General's Office with the objective of helping prevent, through public information, unfair and deceptive acts and practices in trade and commerce.*

*It is presented in the interests both of Alaskan consumers and the honest and reputable businesses serving them — which are, of course, the vast majority.*

*The column offers explanations of the obligations of consumers and businesses under state and federal laws, as well as guidelines for consumer transactions.*

*Reader comments and observations, as well as consumer complaints, may be mailed to the Consumer Protection Service, Office of the Attorney General, in Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage. The addresses are Pouch K, Juneau, Alaska 99801; 360 K Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99501; and P.O. Box 1309, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701.*

**Norman C. Gorsuch**  
**Attorney General**

**BUYING A DISTRIBUTORSHIP?** Buying a distributorship to sell a company's goods can be a good business venture. However, be careful if your main profits are to come from selling distributorships to other people. In this type of plan, you make a sizeable investment for the opportunity to make large sums of money by getting other people to invest like yourself. There is little chance that you will earn enough money to recover your investment. Such "pyramid" or "chain distributor schemes" are prohibited by Alaskan law.

**AFTER SIGNING AN AGREEMENT OR MAKING A PURCHASE.** Most of the time, no further problems will occur. However, it is wise to keep all the evidence you can about your purchase. Then, if necessary, you will be able to prove what was agreed to. Keep copies or originals of the following items:

- papers which you signed
- receipts
- warranties
- brochures
- cancelled checks
- money orders
- price or information tags
- any other written information about the transaction

**ADVERTISEMENTS.** Sometimes low prices are used to lure a person into a store where a salesman will then try to sell the shopper a higher priced item. The salesman may say that the advertised product is sold out, defective, not guaranteed or not what the shopper really needs. Remember that reputable merchants sell products as advertised.