From: <u>Baldwin, Crystal</u>

To: cdockser@vermontpublic.org

Subject: Public Records Act Request 2023-07566

Date: Public Records Act Request 2023-07566

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Public Records Act Request 2023-07566

Attachments: 07 27 2023 CAP response to Dockser Spreadsheet_Redacted_BatesNumbered.pdf

07 27 2023 CAP response to Dockser Spreadsheet Redacted.xlsx

2023-07-27 CAP response to Dockser.pdf 2023-07-25 Dockser PRA request.pdf

Dear Corey Dockser,

Please see attached in response to your Public Records Act request.

Sincerely,

Consumer Assistance Program

Office of the Attorney General

Mailing Address:

109 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05609-1001

Consumer Assistance Hotline: 800-649-2424

Email: ago.cap@vermont.gov

www.ago.vermont.gov



STATE OF VERMONT OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL 109 STATE STREET MONTPELIER, VT 05609-1001

July 28, 2023

Sent via email to: cdockser@vermontpublic.org

Corey Dockser Vermont Public 365 Troy Ave. Colchester, VT 05446

Re: Public Records Request 2023-07566

Dear Corey Dockser:

Regarding your request for public records, dated July 25, 2023, in which you requested: *All complaints of price gouging and disaster-related scams that have been filed with the attorney general's office/Consumer Assistance Program from July 9 until now. Ideally in a spreadsheet format like csv or xlsx.*

Per your request, attached is a spreadsheet containing the requested complaint information. The spreadsheet has been redacted on the following grounds:

• Personal information has been redacted pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317(c)(7)

To the extent you feel information has been withheld in error, you may appeal to the Deputy Attorney General, Robert McDougall. Such appeal should be in writing:

Robert McDougall Deputy Attorney General Office of the Attorney General 109 State Street Montpelier, VT 05609-1001

Sincerely,

Consumer Assistance Program Office of the Attorney General

Complaint/Intake#	Description	Received Date	Intake Method
AC22 044C2	2022 Floori	7/25/2022	Dhara
AG23-04462	2023 Flood	7/25/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	I want to file a complaint against FEMA		Voicemail
AG23-04465	2023 Flood	7/25/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	We were scheduled to close on our house this Friday and we were told by our mortgage co that a reappraisal is needed because		
	Washington County is deemed a disaster county. The appraiser cannot come out until August 9th. The new owners will be homeless and so will we. We are working with an attorney.		
AG23-04365	2023 Flood	7/20/2023	Phone
	Consumer cannot reach insurance company because mail is held up due to flooding. Consumer is unable to reach company via any methods other than mail.		
AG23-04372	2023 Flood	7/20/2023	Phone
	Consumer contacted CAP about \$355 bill owed to Suburban, received notice of intent to disconnect. Consumer alleges he has been trying to get clarification as to why bill is much higher than previous bills he received in the summer. Consumer has been customer of Suburban for 4 years. Consumer did pay \$50 when tag was received (consumer unable to stay at home due to flooding). Uses propane for hot water, heating, and cooking.		
	Consumer called about propane bill being extremely high. Provider refusing to justify the increases.		
AG23-04378	2023 Flood Problem with mobile home park billing for park rent. The mobile home home and property is ruined from the flood.	7/20/2023	Phone
AG23-04322	2023 Flood	7/19/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	House flooded last week, consumer paid \$800 upfront for trash removal. Consumer for drop off, rental, and pick up. Stated they were not told price was based off amount of trash, trying to get trash removed, does not have funds for another dumpster, tried to get smaller dumpster, told it would be even more money.		
AG23-04335	2023 Flood	7/19/2023	Phone- Voicemail
d	Consumer had business inquiry questions, no complaints on file. Consumer signed a contract with business, signed multiple papers but did not get a copy of what he signed. Business has done \$500 worth of work, which consumer has not paid for or received an invoice for. Consumer agreed to \$3,500 worth of work to be done. Consumer then got multiple offers to do work for cheaper.		

CAP000001 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	First / Company Name	Last Name	City	State	Zip		First / Company Name	Address	City	State	Zip
AG23-04462	Lisa			VT						VT	
AG23-04465	Jeff	Blanchard	Barre Town	VT						VT	
AG23-04365	Pamela	Shover		VT						VT	
AG23-04372	Suresh	Murthy	Montpelier	VT	5602	SUBURBAN PROPANE, LP Phone: 8007767263 Address: Attn: Lauren Garofalo, 240 Rt 10 West, PO Box 206, Whippany NJ					
AG23-04378				VT						VT	
AG23-04322	Matt	Lacefield	Johnson	VT		Casella Waste Management Phone: 8022824304 Address: 25 Green Hill Lane, Rutland VT					
AG23-04335	Weston	Kate		VT			Restoration Local				

CAP000002 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	Description	Received Date	Intake Method
AC22 04274	Court Phone Investor Investor Investor	7/47/2022	Dhana
AG23-04371	Scam. Phone. Imposter, law enforcement.	7/17/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	Email Transcript: My name is Lucas McClanahan and I am an Officer with the Colchester Police Department.		
	Recently while on patrol I received a phone call on my personal cell phone from our dispatches non-emergency line. I answered, and on the other end of the line was an automated message that certainly did not come from our department. The message said something along the lines of "This is your local police department, your neighbors have called multiple times about noise complaints, can you confirm the location of your house?"		
	Naturally I hung up, but you can see my concern regarding scammers using the actual phone number of my department, and the possibility that other citizens may be fooled by this. I understand there are a lot of scams going around right now, especially after the recent storm and flooding troubles in the state, but I felt this was important enough to contact your office directly.		
	If you have any more questions or have a recommended course of action please feel free to contact me!		
	2023 Flood	7/15/2023	E-Mail
	Email Transcript: Hi! I'm aware of several businesses in the Barre/Berlin area that knowingly held their workers in stores after the flood became unsafe, and after even State offices shut down, to the point where some had to stay overnight and others drove home in extremely unsafe conditions (three feet of water, I'm hearing from one, lifted them off the road, but they made contact with the ground again).		
	One of these businesses has been known to retaliate against workers making complaints about discrimination if they are able to keep the complaints in-house. While I am probably more aware than the average person about how illegal that practice is, sadly, it's a reality that often goes unreported and unchecked. I'm concerned that it will happen again if these workers push back with their concerns regarding the unsafe conditions they were held under threat of job loss to endure.		
	Does the AGO have any suggested recourse or action for these affected workers? They are mostly minimum wage earners, or close to min. They would not have easy access to legal assistance.		
	Thank you		
AG23-04233	Consumer had questions about a potential scam. She also seems to been in crisis about the flood situation. She said she gave credit card information to an individual over the phone. Not sure if this was a legitimate entity but it doesn't sound good.	7/14/2023	Phone
AG23-04236	2023 Flood Consumer called with questions about flood resources, specifically about insurance claims	7/14/2023	Phone
AG23-04238	I bought an RV in August 2022 and have a one year warranty. Purchase is from RV 1 and we have been calling for the last three weeks. I understand they are not there because of the flood. We called Grand Design (the manuf) and they told us we are the second owners. We paid \$44,000 for a "new" RV and was not told it was a used RV.	7/14/2023	Phone

CAP000003 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	First / Company Name	Last Name	City	State	Zip	Complaint Against NAME	First / Company Name	Address	City	State	Zip
AG23-04371	Lucas	McClanahan		VT		Scam imposter - law enforcement (not SSN phishing scam or IRS scam)					
			Marshfield	VT							
AG23-04233			Eastover	VT						VT	
AG23-04236	Hannah	Huff	Jeffersonville	VT						VT	
AG23-04238	David	Pingree	East Burke	VT		RV One Superstore Vermont, formally dba Vermont Country Campers Phone: 8022236471 Address: 1498 US Route 2, East Montpelier VT				VT	

CAP000004 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	Description	Received Date	Intake Method
AG23-04243	2023 flood Judy called in response to the scam alert. She is helping her Mom assess/move out of her mobile home damaged in the 2023 flood. Inquiring on a business who is offering to buy her mom's mobile home. Mike's pre-owned homes out of East Barre.	7/14/2023	Phone- Voicemail
AG23-04186	2023 Flood Woman called on behalf of someone. Person has not had food in their house for a week due to 2023 flood making it impossible to reach her. She cannot leave the home due to disability.	7/12/2023	Phone
AG23-04418	2023 Flood Consumer sent email about Airbnb bought in Vermont being flooded. Referred over the phone to state AG's office of the state consumer is from and where Airbnb is located.	7/12/2023	Mail
AG23-04488	Complaint Transcript: requested cost of room for one night as it was during the week of the flood was quoted \$419 before taxes	7/26/2023	Website
AG23-04457	I over heard some where that Hollow Inn Motel was charging \$599.00 for a one night stay, I found that weird because they have been housing families for 3 years due to covid and prior to that I had stayed there and I paid \$89.00 for 1 night. I went on the web site and put the information in for 1 night and sure enough it came up at \$599.00. This is really unfair to all those in need. I wanted someone to know	7/15/2023	Website
OSF 2772	Reports received email from estimates@vermontconstructioncompany.com (via hubspot). Says email "Spoke highly of a supposed employee and did I want to get to know him, in a business relationship, presumably." Regarding scam form question asking whether a website was incuded, says "Not exactly. It is part of the email address: estimates@vermontconstructioncompany.com. Vermont Construction Company does exist. It has received some unflattering reviews on Yelp. A Google search merely for this name does not match the address and phone numbers supplied. Colchester is a match. I have not been scammed. I am reporting a potential scam since the VT AG has put out to Vermont media to be on high alert for home improvement scams after the flood. The flood was not mentioned. I use GMail and for it to go to my inbox was fishy from the start. I printed the email to file and was careful to avoid clicking any links and will report to GMail as junk (or worse if an option). I will delete it, though it will retrievable for 30 days, if you want it. Contact info from the email, not Google: Dave Richards, Owner/Operator, (802) 900 - 9595 Vermont Construction Company, 182 Hegeman Avenue, Colchester, Vermont 05446"	7/19/2023	Online Scam Form
OSF 2774	Reports received email that "Appeared to be related to Flood Relief from and Regional Development Funding Corp (RDC)."	7/20/2023	Online Scam Form

CAP000005 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	First / Company Name	Last Name	City	State	Zip	Complaint Against NAME	First / Company Name	Address	City	State	Zip
AG23-04243	Judy	Thurlow		VT						VT	
AG23-04186	Rolland, Barbara obo Linda	Boadman	Barre	VT	5641					VT	
AG23-04418	Maria	McDowell								VT	
AG23-04488	Gordon	Buswell	Greenwood	SC	29649		Comfort Inn & Suites Montpelier- Berlin	213 Paine Turnpike N	Berlin	VT	5602
AG23-04457	Keera	Relation	Barre	VT	5641		Hollow Inn Motel		Barre	VT	5641
OSF 2772	Christina	Colombe	Barre	VT	5641	Vermont Construction Company		182 Hegeman Avenue	Colchester	VT	5446
OSF 2774	Renée	Grzankowski	Montpelier	VT	5602	Scam Telemarketing/Solicitation Charities/Political-Fake					

CAP000006 07/28/2023

Complaint/Intake#	Description	Received Date	Intake Method
AG23-04462	2023 Flood	7/25/2023	Phone-
			Voicemail
	I want to file a complaint against FEMA		
AG23-04465	2023 Flood	7/25/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	We were scheduled to close on our house this Friday and we were told by our mortgage co that a reappraisal is needed because		
	Washington County is deemed a disaster county. The appraiser cannot come out until August 9th. The new owners will be homeless		
	and so will we. We are working with an attorney.		
AG23-04365	2023 Flood	7/20/2023	Phone
	Consumer cannot reach insurance company because mail is held up due to flooding. Consumer is unable to reach company via any		
	methods other than mail.		
AG23-04372	2023 Flood	7/20/2023	Phone
	Consumer contacted CAP about \$355 bill owed to Suburban, received notice of intent to disconnect. Consumer alleges he has been		
	trying to get clarification as to why bill is much higher than previous bills he received in the summer. Consumer has been customer of		
	Suburban for 4 years. Consumer did pay \$50 when tag was received (consumer unable to stay at home due to flooding). Uses propane		
	for hot water, heating, and cooking.		
	Consumer called about propane bill being extremely high. Provider refusing to justify the increases.		
AG23-04378	2023 Flood	7/20/2023	Phone
	Problem with mobile home park billing for park rent. The mobile home home and property is ruined from the flood.	,,_,,_,	
AG23-04322	2023 Flood	7/19/2023	Phone-
			Voicemail
	House flooded last week, consumer paid \$800 upfront for trash removal. Consumer for drop off, rental, and pick up. Stated they were		
	not told price was based off amount of trash, trying to get trash removed, does not have funds for another dumpster, tried to get		
	smaller dumpster, told it would be even more money.		
AG23-04335	2023 Flood	7/19/2023	Phone-
			Voicemail
	Consumer had business inquiry questions, no complaints on file. Consumer signed a contract with business, signed multiple papers but		
	did not get a copy of what he signed. Business has done \$500 worth of work, which consumer has not paid for or received an invoice for.		
	Consumer agreed to \$3,500 worth of work to be done. Consumer then got multiple offers to do work for cheaper.		

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Complaint/Intake#	Description	Received Date	Intake Method
		-1-1-1-1-1	
AG23-04371	Scam. Phone. Imposter, law enforcement.	7/17/2023	Phone- Voicemail
	Email Transcript: My name is Lucas McClanahan and I am an Officer with the Colchester Police Department.		
	Recently while on patrol I received a phone call on my personal cell phone from our dispatches non-emergency line. I answered, and on the other end of the line was an automated message that certainly did not come from our department. The message said something along the lines of "This is your local police department, your neighbors have called multiple times about noise complaints, can you confirm the location of your house?"		
	Naturally I hung up, but you can see my concern regarding scammers using the actual phone number of my department, and the possibility that other citizens may be fooled by this. I understand there are a lot of scams going around right now, especially after the recent storm and flooding troubles in the state, but I felt this was important enough to contact your office directly.		
	If you have any more questions or have a recommended course of action please feel free to contact me!		
REDACTED	2023 Flood	7/15/2023	E-Mail
REDACTED	2023 11000	7/13/2023	L-Iviali
	Email Transcript: Hi! I'm aware of several businesses in the Barre/Berlin area that knowingly held their workers in stores after the flood became unsafe, and after even State offices shut down, to the point where some had to stay overnight and others drove home in extremely unsafe conditions (three feet of water, I'm hearing from one, lifted them off the road, but they made contact with the ground again).		
	One of these businesses has been known to retaliate against workers making complaints about discrimination if they are able to keep the complaints in-house. While I am probably more aware than the average person about how illegal that practice is, sadly, it's a reality that often goes unreported and unchecked. I'm concerned that it will happen again if these workers push back with their concerns regarding the unsafe conditions they were held under threat of job loss to endure.		
	Does the AGO have any suggested recourse or action for these affected workers? They are mostly minimum wage earners, or close to min. They would not have easy access to legal assistance.		
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AG23-04233	Consumer had questions about a potential scam. She also seems to been in crisis about the flood situation. She said she gave credit card information to an individual over the phone. Not sure if this was a legitimate entity but it doesn't sound good.	7/14/2023	Phone
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AG23-04371	Lucas	McClanahan		VT		Scam imposter - law enforcement (not SSN phishing scam or IRS scam)					
REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	Marshfield	VT							
AG23-04233	REDACTED	REDACTED	Eastover	VT						VT	
AG23-04236	Hannah	Huff	Jeffersonville	VT						VT	
AG23-04238	David	Pingree	East Burke	VT	5832	RV One Superstore Vermont, formally dba Vermont Country Campers Phone: 8022236471 Address: 1498 US Route 2, East Montpelier VT				VT	

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AG23-04186	2023 Flood Woman called on behalf of someone. Person has not had food in their house for a week due to 2023 flood making it impossible to reach her. She cannot leave the home due to disability.	7/12/2023	Phone
AG23-04418	2023 Flood Consumer sent email about Airbnb bought in Vermont being flooded. Referred over the phone to state AG's office of the state consumer is from and where Airbnb is located.	7/12/2023	Mail
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