

Wisconsin Consumers' Top Complaints of 2025

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MADISON, Wis. – In 2025, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) received thousands of written complaints from Wisconsin consumers. DATCP's Bureau of Consumer Protection has run the numbers, ranked last year's top complaint categories – including one that has ranked among the top ten for the first time – and found complaints up overall since 2024.

"Last year's top ten complaint categories represent some of the most common issues Wisconsin consumers struggled with – issues that anyone could encounter in daily life," said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. "No matter how common the problem, if consumers are facing a disagreement with a business that they have been unable to resolve, DATCP is here to help."

Complaint counts increased in most of the top categories, and a new category has risen to the tenth spot for the first time. However, there were other complaint categories that did not make the 'top ten' list but remain noteworthy, with most also receiving an increase in complaints in 2025. At thirteenth, the category 'Computers and Computer Equipment' received 103 written complaints, but 1,185 phone calls to the Consumer Protection Hotline – the third highest call category. The categories 'Entertainment and Recreation' and 'Motor Vehicle Accessories/Parts' received 147 and 101 complaints respectively and have both ranked among the top ten categories in past years. 'Gas Pump Accuracy' also received 101 complaints in 2025. Additional categories of note were 'Extended Warranties' (107 complaints), 'Timeshares and Resellers' (95 complaints), and 'Manufactured Housing and Housing Communities' (90 complaints, doubling since 2024).

What do all these categories have in common? DATCP is responsible for enforcing consumer protection regulations that span a variety of issues, and DATCP can assist with all of them. Consumers can handle many of their own problems with a business, but sometimes no amount of education, preparation, or persistence is enough to reach a solution. When that happens, DATCP's Consumer Protection team is available to help.

DATCP's involvement makes a difference. In 2025, numerous home improvement contractors who allegedly violated Wisconsin law faced jail time, probation, and had to pay tens of thousands of dollars in restitutions and forfeitures. DATCP reached a \$450,000 settlement with a telecommunications provider to resolve allegations that they misrepresented the monthly price of their internet services. One mediation effort saved a consumer \$85,000 on a medical procedure.

Consumers can request assistance with their issues, no matter how common, big, or small, by filing an online complaint on DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov, or contacting DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

Summary of DATCP's top ten consumer complaints filed in 2025:

1. Landlord-Tenant Issues: 2,620 complaints

Landlord-Tenant has remained the number one complaint since 2022. Last year, the Consumer Protection Hotline received 5,220 phone calls about this issue, thousands more than any other category. Common issues included failure to maintain the premises, security deposit returns, eviction, unauthorized entry, mold, infestation, inadequate disclosures, and unsatisfactory service.



2. Telemarketing: 1,283 complaints

Commonly reported issues in this category included phishing and spoofing, imposter scams, robocalls, harassment, and violations of the Do Not Call Registry.

3. Home Improvement: 641 complaints

Commonly reported home improvement issues concerned quality of work, charges for services/repairs that were not performed, delays in performance, failure to provide services and materials, failure to honor warranties, deceptive and misleading representations, and failure to disclose lien rights.

4. Telecommunications: 633 complaints

This category saw an increase in complaints and rose from fifth place in 2024 to fourth place. Consumers reported issues about billing disputes, customer dissatisfaction, cancelation denials, service disconnections/terminations, deceptive and misleading representations, agreed-upon terms not being followed, and refund and adjustment policies.

5. Identity Theft: 468 complaints

Many of these reports involved takeovers of online accounts like social media profiles or financial accounts, with additional issues including fraud, data breaches, and compromised identification documents.

6. Medical Services: 456 complaints

The top issue in this category was medical billing disputes. Others included misleading representations and unsatisfactory service.

7. Motor Vehicle Repair: 445 complaints

Complaints in this category increased significantly in 2025 compared to the previous year – by more than 100 complaints – with top issues including unsatisfactory quality of work, damage and loss of property, failure to honor agreements or perform work, performance delays, untrue or misleading advertisements, charges above estimates, charges for work not performed, and unauthorized service.

8. Motor Vehicle Sales: 380 complaints

The most common issues cited in these complaints were inadequate disclosures, prize notice mailers, and untrue, deceptive, and misleading representations. DATCP's primary responsibility in this category is advertising and marketing, and the agency works closely with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to protect new and used vehicle buyers.

9. Travel: 219 complaints

The travel category covers a wide range of issues such as airlines, hotels and lodging, auto rentals, and travel service bundles, with common consumer complaints including billing disputes, refund and adjustment policies, charges above estimates, failure to provide services, failure to return deposits, and unsatisfactory service.

10. Major Appliances: 158 complaints

DATCP's number ten consumer complaint category of 2025 is new to the top ten list. Top issues in this category included defective products, billing disputes, refund/adjustment policies, failure to honor agreements, and untrue, deceptive, and misleading representations. A number of these complaints were filed after one relevant business closed on short notice, leaving many of its customers with questions and concerns.

For more information and consumer protection resources, or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov or contact DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

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CONSUMER COMPLAINT STATISTICS 2025

<u>RANK IN 2025</u>	<u>COMPLAINT CATEGORY</u>	<u>NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS</u>	<u>CHANGE SINCE 2024</u>
1	Landlord/Tenant	2,620	↑ 95
2	Telemarketing	1,283	↓ 230
3	Home Improvement	641	↓ 23
4	Telecommunications	633	↑ 106
5	Identity Theft	468	↓ 150
6	Medical Services	456	↑ 17
7	Motor Vehicle Repair	445	↑ 104
8	Motor Vehicle Sales	380	↑ 83
9	Travel	219	↓ 25
10	Major Appliances	158	↑ 55

Total number of consumer complaints received in 2025: 11,884