



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

COMMERCE DEPARTMENT Consumer Services Office

An Inventory of Its Records

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Agency:** Minnesota. Office of Consumer Services.
- Title:** Records.
- Dates:** 1971-1993.
- Abstract:** Files of the office's director and assistants and of its residential utility consumers unit, and sampled consumer complaints.
- Quantity:** 5.1 cu. ft. (5 boxes; 1 partial box).
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for box locations.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE RECORDS

The administrative files include correspondence, minutes, television scripts, testimony, speeches, news releases and clippings, and miscellany of the office's directors, mainly Sherry Chenoweth, and assistants, and of its residential utility consumers unit.

The consumer complaints comprise complaints of unfair trade practices made by people throughout the United States against Minnesota business firms, mail order houses, and others, and by Minnesota consumers against out-of-state businesses doing business or selling products in Minnesota. Each file contains a worksheet listing communications or actions on the complaint, related correspondence, and sometimes submitted evidence. These files constitute a 1:10 linear sample of the original consumer complaints.

RELATED MATERIALS

Minnesota. Attorney General. Consumer Division. Consumer complaints (cataloged separately) represents a parallel consumer assistance program into which that of the Commerce Department was merged in 1983.

INDEX TERMS

These records are indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

Consumer complaints—Minnesota.
Consumer protection—Minnesota.
Public utilities—Minnesota.
Trade regulation--Minnesota.

Persons:

Chenoweth, Sherry.
Lapakko, Tobey.

Organizations:

Minnesota. Department of Commerce.

Types of Documents:

Press releases.
Scripts.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation:

[Indicate the cited item and/or file here]. Minnesota. Office of Consumer Services.
Records. Minnesota Historical Society. State Archives.
See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

Accession Information:

Accession numbers: 983-34; 983-92; 988-41; 989-201

Processing Information:

Appraisal note: Complaint files, 1972-1978, were authorized for destruction contingent on existence of summary log and indexes (PR-1 #83-420). See memo in accession file 984-128 for sampling decision on Attorney General consumer complaints.
Catalog ID No.: 1706367

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RECORDS

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note the location shown below.

Director's Office:

Location

- 114.A.13.2F Sherry Chenoweth correspondence, 1975-1977. 2 folders.
Information Officer correspondence, 1977.
Scripts:
 "Take Five," KSTP-TV, 1974-1975.
 "Newsnine Commentary," KMSP-TV, 1976.
 Miscellaneous drafts, correspondence, etc., [undated], 1975-1976.
Testimony:
 1971-1979. 3 folders.
 Miscellany, [undated].
 Testimony before legislative hearings and other bodies by
 Consumer Services staff.

Legislation, 1973.
News releases, 1979-1981.
- 120.A.2.6F News releases, 1979-1984, 1993. 2 folders.
Circular letters, Nos. 1-16, May 1976 – March 1981.
- 114.A.13.2F Press clippings, 1979-1981. 4 folders, 1 volume.

Residential Utility Consumers Unit:

Location

- 114.A.13.3B Minutes, 1978 - March 1983 (incomplete). 3 folders.
Outgoing chronological correspondence, July 1978 - June 1981. 7
folders.
Rate case outgoing chronological correspondence, August 1978 - August
1979.
Incoming correspondence, September 1978-February 1979.

[Director's Office?]:

Location

114.A.13.3B Press releases, 1973-1977. 4 folders.
 Sherry Chenoweth: miscellaneous speeches, presentations, and
 testimony, 1975-1977.
 Consumer Service Reports, miscellaneous, [ca. 1975].
 Task Force on Public/Educational Radio, 1975-1976.
 Miscellaneous reports and correspondence.

 Consumer Services Office grant applications, 1979-1980. 2 volumes.
 Department Head Conference records, 1971-1975. 2 folders.
 Radio spots, 1975. 1 partial folder.
 Newspaper clipping, 1982. 1 item in partial folder.
 Tobey Lapakko speeches, 1978. 2 folders.

Consumer Complaints, 1981-1983:

 Arranged by year; alphabetically within each year by name of company complained
 against.

Location

128.I.14.6F Serial Photography Dept. - Yukon Industries, 1981.
128.I.14.7B A & C Johnson Company - Montgomery Ward, 1982.
128.I.14.8F Mungers Motors - Wozniak's, 1982.
 Abornatty & Closther, Ltd. - Zenith Sales Company, 1983.