

Complaint Trends in Roofing Industry

Improvements seen in Numbers, Customer Satisfaction

(Editor's Note: In this issue of The Bridge, we begin a new series tracking the complaint trends in various industries based on information in the BBB database and not available elsewhere. By using the BBB's dispute resolution services successfully, companies can satisfy and retain their customers.)

The roofing and guttering industry perennially has ranked among the top 10 industries in terms of complaints filed with the BBB. In 2007, however, it dropped off the list and was in 12th place.

Annually, the industry also accounts for more than 25,000 people seeking BBB reliability reports about companies in the industry.

In analyzing the stats, there's additional good news.

For example, the overall customer satisfaction rate for the industry (i.e., whether a complainant was satisfied how the company addressed the complaint) is trending upward. After dipping to 56.9% in 2005, the rate rose to 58.3% in 2006 and 69.7% in 2007, its highest level in the past six years.

Except for one of the past six years,



BBB Accredited Businesses in the roofing industry recorded 100% satisfaction rates. The exception was 98.6% in 2006.

Relatively speaking, the industry has less than its share of complaints. While 2.7% of the companies in the BBB database are roofing and guttering companies, they accounted for only 1.5% of the total complaints received by the BBB last year.

This year's drop in the ranking of companies with the most complaints follows a trend of moving lower on the list. In 2004, it ranked 7th, in 2005 it ranked 8th, in 2006 it ranked 9th and, as mentioned earlier, in 2007 it ranked 12th.

"We are encouraged by the statistics which seem to indicate that roofing

companies are improving their efforts toward customer satisfaction," said Michelle L. Corey, president of the BBB. "Happier customers mean continued business success."

Why do customers complain?

The major reason is unsatisfactory workmanship. Of all of the complaints received in 2007, more than half of the customers cited that as the main basis for their complaints. (Some customers cited more than one reason for a complaint.)

Running a surprising second was the inability to contact the company, which 25% of the customers cited as a reason for their complaints.

Other complaint causes and the percentage of customers who cited them are: delay or failure to start or finish work, 16%; delay or failure to make repairs, 13%; poor customer service, 11%; and missed appointments, 10%.

In summary, it appears that there is marked improvement in customer relations in the roofing and guttering industry, but improvement also can be made.