

PRESS RELEASE

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Insurance Regulators Encourage Consumers to “Get Smart About Insurance”

Although most Americans feel they have about the right amount of insurance coverage (72%, up from 67% last year), only 33% say they understand the details of their coverage “very well,” according to a recent survey by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (“NAIC”).

To gauge Americans’ understanding and perceptions of their insurance coverage, the NAIC commissioned a national research company to conduct a telephone survey of 1,009 adults, asking a range of questions based upon various types of insurance coverage, including life, home, auto, health, disability personal liability and others. Arizona’s Director of Insurance, Christina Urias, says, “young adults are particularly in need of education about the nature of insurance coverage, given their limited life experience when they enter the insurance market.” Not surprisingly, the youngest adults in the NAIC survey (ages 18-24) were the least likely to understand the details of their insurance coverage very well; whereas, 45% of older Americans (age 65 and older), claimed to know their insurance details very well.

“No matter how old you are, a primary benefit of having insurance is peace of mind,” says Director Urias. To increase that peace of mind and facilitate a better understanding of insurance matters, the Arizona Department of Insurance is participating in the third annual **Get Smart About Insurance Week** from January 19-23, 2004 and is urging consumers to become more educated about their insurance needs. “Insurance consumers are wise to look out for their own best interests,” says Director Urias, “and their Department of Insurance can help.” During this special week, consumers are urged to call the Department of Insurance at (602) 912-8444 (Phoenix) or (800) 325-2548, or visit

www.naic.org/gsw to request a free brochure and get information about what they need and should expect from insurance coverage.

The Arizona Department of Insurance offers a variety of tools to help consumers comparison shop for their insurance and to help them better understand their insurance. “An Overview of the Arizona Department of Insurance” describes the Department’s services and activities. Consumers can obtain this, and a variety of other consumer Department publications, by calling us or by visiting our website at www.id.state.az.us. “The Arizona Department of Insurance is here to give consumers impartial insurance related information,” Director Urias says.

“Get Smart” about insurance and take these important steps to ensure wise insurance purchases:

- Call the Arizona Department of Insurance to verify that the agent and insurer you’re considering doing business with are properly licensed.
- Obtain *free* information from the Arizona Department of Insurance about the insurance company, agent, and insurance product before you make a purchase—call us regarding any type of insurance: auto, home, health, life, Medicare Supplement, Long Term Care, commercial.
- Schedule a routine “check-up” with your insurance providers at least once a year.
- Inquire about the cost benefit of opting for higher deductibles.
- Ask specifically about discounts for good driving records, good health, good grades, special training.
- Shop around for identical products and services. Not every company charges the same rate, or provides the same service.
- Remember: an insurance policy is a legal contract. Read it carefully and ask questions.

Finally, Director Urias adds, “the Arizona Department of Insurance is a great source of unbiased information about the insurance industry and insurance products. I urge Arizona consumers to take this opportunity, during **Get Smart About Insurance Week**, to carefully review their insurance needs and take advantage of all the information and assistance the Department has to offer.”

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