

# *CARPET & TILE CLEANING: Don't Get Floored!*

## **Trap**

Miriam of Delray Beach responded to a colorful ad (with coupons!) for carpet and tile cleaning. When the workers arrived they rushed through her rooms and told her the basic service would not work on her floors. She agreed to the extra cleaning without asking what the cost would be. They handed her a bill for over \$1,000. She never knew the additional charges would bring the bill to ten times the amount she had budgeted. Miriam, alone and intimidated, wrote a check to them even though the floors were not done to her satisfaction.

## **Tips**

When arranging for carpet or tile cleaning:

- **Be wary of too-good-to-be-true claims.** There may be hidden costs or it may be a “bait and switch” scheme. Carefully read the small print on coupons.
- **Research the company.** How long have they been in business? Is there a local address/phone number? Are there complaints filed with Consumer Affairs? Do they have insurance, and have they paid a business tax? Ask for references.
- **Get a written estimate with the specifics in writing before allowing any work to be done.** Will they move furniture? What machines/chemicals will be used? Are there extra charges for traffic areas? What warranty does the business offer?
- **Be the boss.** Ask them to leave your house if you feel they are applying too much sales pressure. Someone should always be there when workers are present.
- **Never pay cash or write check to “cash.”** Check in advance to determine what forms of payment the company will accept. Credit card payments can often be disputed with the credit card company. Do not give your credit card/bank account number until it is time to pay for the work.

**For more information, or to file a complaint contact Consumer Affairs  
Call 561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 1-888-852-7362)**