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Our monthly newsletter addresses consumer insurance topics as well as timely information on issues affecting senior citizens in Louisiana.



To find out if Consumer Advocacy will be in your area or to request a speaker for your organization or group, call (225) 219-0619 or send an email to [consumeradvocacy@ldi.la.gov](mailto:consumeradvocacy@ldi.la.gov)

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## New Year, New Look: The LDI Launches a Brand New Website

The Louisiana Department of Insurance has launched a new website with enhanced features designed to provide users with improved services. With its new streamlined design, the website is easy to use and mobile-friendly.

Visit [www.ldi.la.gov](http://www.ldi.la.gov) to check out the new website. Browse the site from the Consumer or the Industry tab and utilize the online services provided by the LDI. You can do such things as find companies and agents in Louisiana, submit and track complaints and request a search for a lost life insurance policy. Or you can sign up for the Department's e-mail notification list to receive press releases and newsletters.

## Shop Til You Drop

The 2014 ["Shop Your Rates"](#) guides are now accessible on the LDI's website. Consumers can now shop for the best rates when they use this online interactive system to compare homeowners and automobile insurance rates from insurance providers in the state.

The "Shop Your Rates" interactive guides allow consumers to choose between different scenarios with several variables to see samples of available rate quotes from insurers. In the homeowners portion of "Shop Your Rates," you can choose from 12 different criteria including age and size of home, level of coverage desired, type of construction, credit scores, claim history and whether a home is fully mitigated for storm protection. After selecting the city, a list of companies and their rates based on your selections is provided.

For an example of how broadly the rates vary, a 10-year old, \$200,000 value, 1800 sq. ft. brick home in Baton Rouge with \$100,000 contents and a 2 percent hurricane deduction had sample rates that ranged from \$976 to \$2,871. These rates did not include Citizens insurance company.

The Auto Rate Comparison Guide provides seven specific scenarios from which to choose based on age, sex, marital status, driving record and age of the vehicle. After selecting a scenario, consumers can then choose a city to see a sample of available rate quotes from various insurance companies.

Policyholders should keep in mind that the scenarios presented in the "Shop Your Rates" interactive guides are for illustrative purposes only and are not designed to match any individual's exact circumstances. They are presented to demonstrate the relative differences between insurance companies and also demonstrate the importance of shopping around for the best insurance policy to protect your home or car.

After reviewing the sample rates provided, consumers should contact their preferred insurance agent or company to receive an official premium quote.

The "Shop Your Rates" [Homeowners](#) and [Automobile](#) Rate Comparison

Guides can also be accessed by visiting the Consumer section of the LDI's website [www.ldi.la.gov](http://www.ldi.la.gov).

## Insurance Checklist for the New Year

The start of a new year is a great time to reevaluate your insurance policies. Take some time to talk with your agent and review your policies and see if they meet your current needs. Your agent or company can help determine whether your current policies provide adequate coverage or if you might need more or less. Even if you haven't experienced a life changing event, you could be eligible for discounts or new insurance products may better serve your needs.

**Life Insurance.** Changes—such as a birth, divorce, remarriage or even a new mortgage or new job—are indicators that you might need to make changes to your life insurance policy. In the case of the birth of a child or a new marriage, you might want to consider increasing your death benefit. Alternatively, events like paying off your mortgage, retirement or children finishing college might mean that you can lower your life insurance coverage and premiums.

**Homeowners/Rental Insurance.** This is a good time to make sure your homeowners or rental policy is up to date. Take some photos or video of your prized possessions. Remember to note any fine jewelry or antique items and their value so you can talk with your insurance agent or insurance company to ensure they are properly covered.

**Auto Insurance.** Have you had any changes to your driving habits? If so, tell your agent to ensure your auto policy will cover you in case of an accident. Review your deductibles for comprehensive and collision coverage. This is the amount you will pay if your car is damaged or totaled without fault of another driver. Raising or lowering this amount can affect your premium. Before hitting the road, make sure you have a copy of your insurance card and your insurance agent or company's number in your vehicle.

**Health Insurance.** You may have recently enrolled or changed your health insurance whether through your employer, Medicare or your state exchange. Make sure you have new insurance cards. Before you visit a doctor, verify that your paperwork is in order.

For more information, visit [www.ldi.la.gov](http://www.ldi.la.gov) or the National Association of Insurance Commissioners educational website [www.insureUonline.org](http://www.insureUonline.org).

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