

**30<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CAUTION AGAINST FRAUDULENT PRACTICES IN BOREHOLE DRILLING**

The Competition and Consumer Authority (CCA) has received a high number of consumer complaints against some local borehole drilling companies, some of which are involved in unfair and fraudulent businesses practices.

From January 2022 to date, the CCA has received a total of 63 consumer complaints against borehole drilling companies. The common thread among these complaints is that borehole drilling companies usually request for a down, or full payment before the actual service can be carried out. In most cases, these companies disappear without providing such service, while in some instances, the delivery of the service drags for months often causing inconvenience to the consumers. Some complaints relate to substandard drilling services, which were done without reasonable care and skill.

The public is therefore advised to be vigilant and make informed decisions before engaging any of the borehole drilling companies to avoid being swindled.

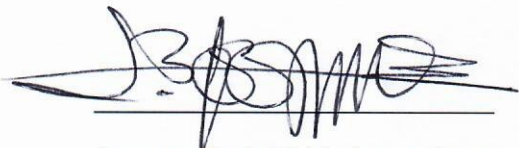
The CCA advises consumers to consider the following guidelines before engaging or contracting any borehole drilling company:

- Ensure that the borehole drilling company is legitimate and registered with the Companies and Intellectual Property Authority (CIPA), and is licensed and fully operational;
- Verify the physical location of the company or operational office. The Authority has realised that some drillers are nomadic and it becomes difficult to serve them with papers when there is a dispute;
- Read and understand the terms and conditions together with the quotation provided before appending signatures;

- Where possible, ask for reviews from customers who have previously engaged the services of the drilling company;
- Ensure that before the actual drilling takes place, there is an agreement that entails the services that are to be performed by the driller and such be fully understood before any contract signing and payment is made;
- Be available on site throughout the drilling process and ensure there is close supervision of the borehole drilling by qualified and experienced personnel.

The Authority further encourages consumers to liaise with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in their respective areas to obtain technical advice before engaging a borehole drilling company. The department can also assist consumers with an updated list of licensed borehole drilling contractors, ground water consultants and pump tests contractors to use.

The CCA's collaborations with the DWS have revealed that it is always advisable for consumers to ensure that agreements with their respective drillers detail the technical specifications of drilling the borehole, which include the agreed method of drilling, the design, construction and cleaning of the borehole.



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