

DON'T GET SCAMMED!

PECO has joined forces, for the second year in a row, with electric & natural gas utility companies across the United States & Canada to help provide essential information that can help utility customers avoid being scammed. The collaborating energy companies have joined together again this year and designated Nov. 15 as "Utilities United Against Scams Day." This day will be supported by a week-long campaign with content, online and on social media channels, focused on exposing the tricks scammers use to steal money from customers, and how customers can protect themselves.

When being scammed, a customer typically receives an unsolicited phone call from an individual who falsely claims to be a utility representative. The scammer warns that the customer's service will be shut off if the customer fails to make a payment – usually within a short timeframe through a prepaid debit card. Scammers have even replicated the upfront Interactive Voice Response system of some utilities, so when customers call the number provided by the scammer, it sounds like a legitimate business. Some of these scammers also use caller ID spoofing to replicate a utilities phone number.

Red flags for scam activity

- The scammer often becomes aggressive and tells a customer his or her account is past due and service will be shut off if a large payment isn't made – usually within less than an hour.
- The scammer instructs the customer to purchase a prepaid debit or credit card – widely available at most retail stores – then call him or her back to supposedly make a payment.
- The scammer asks the customer for the prepaid card's receipt number and PIN number, which grants instant access to the funds loaded to the card.

How to protect yourself

- Utility representatives will never ask or require a customer with a past due balance to purchase a prepaid debit card to avoid disconnection.
- Customers can make payments online, by phone, automatic bank withdraw, mail or in person.
- Customers with a past due balance will receive multiple shut off notifications – never a single notification one hour before disconnection.

Don't Get Scammed: Customers can avoid being scammed by taking a few precautions:

Never provide social security numbers or personal information to anyone initiating contact with you claiming to be a utility representative or requesting you to send money to another person or entity other than your local utility providers.

Always ask to see a company photo ID before allowing any utility worker into your home or business.

When in doubt, check it out. Be skeptical of individuals wearing clothing with old or defaced company logos. If you have any doubts, ask to see a company photo ID.

Never make payment for services to anyone coming to the door. Any PECO customer who believes he or she has been a target of a scam is urged to contact their local police, and call PECO immediately at 1-800-494-4000 to report the situation.