



Public Service Commission of West Virginia

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Public Service Commission Cautions Consumers to Be Aware of Utility Scams

CHARLESTON, WV – The Public Service Commission of West Virginia cautions utility customers to be alert to the possibility of utility scams. This warning comes just in time for Utility Scam Awareness Day and as several utility scams have been reported around the state. Protect yourself by learning the signs of a potential utility scam and knowing the steps to take if you think someone claiming to be from your utility is suspicious.

If someone claiming to represent a utility comes to your door, ask to see identification. A legitimate employee will show you a valid company ID. If you aren't sure the person at your door is legitimate, do not let them in your house. Instead, call the company to verify whether they have sent someone to your home or business. Use the customer service phone number that appears on your utility bill or on the utility's website.

Caller ID spoofing software may make it appear that a phone call is coming from the utility company. If you receive a suspicious call, hang up immediately. Another version of the scam is an email message demanding immediate online payment or payment via money order, wire transfer or a prepaid debit card. The email may have the appearance of an actual email from the utility, and may even include a link to a website that looks like the utility's website. If you receive such an email, do not click on any link and delete the email immediately. Use the information printed on your utility bill to contact the company directly.

Public utilities will send written notification if your account is past due. If company representatives contact you by phone, they will explain how payment may be made. They will never ask for your bank or credit card information over the phone or by email, nor will they direct you to buy a prepaid debit card or make a wire transfer as payment. If you believe you have been a victim of one of these scams, contact local law enforcement or the Commission's Consumer Affairs Technicians at 1-800-642-8544.

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