

FirstEnergy Reminds Customers to Remain Vigilant Against Scams and Fraud

Participating in “Utilities United Against Scams Day” Nov. 16

Akron, Ohio – Across the country, con artists continue using scare tactics in an effort to steal money and personal information from utility customers. As part of FirstEnergy Corp.’s (NYSE: FE) ongoing efforts to raise awareness about this continuing problem, the company is joining more than two dozen electric and gas utilities across the United States and Canada to recognize November 16 as “Utilities United Against Scams Day.”

“We take our customers’ safety and security very seriously,” said Gary W. Grant, vice president of customer service for FirstEnergy Utilities. “Through our website, social media outreach, newsletters and participation in industry efforts such as Utilities United Against Scams Day, we continue working to educate customers about scam activity and help them avoid falling victim to con artists who are posing as representatives of our company.”

Scam artists impersonating utility company employees have targeted victims through door-to-door visits, phone calls, and electronic communications. The criminals often try to instill fear that power will be disconnected if the victim does not comply with the demands. Customers have reported the theft of money, personal data and valuables.

FirstEnergy’s award-winning Scam and Fraud Information website describes some of the most widespread schemes targeting utility customers, and offers facts and safety reminders that can help customers avoid becoming a victim of these crimes.

Scams listed on the site include:

- **Power shut-off scam:** In this nationwide scam, customers have reported receiving phone calls from someone who claims to be associated with their utility. The caller threatens to shut off the customer’s power unless an immediate payment is made, and the customer is often instructed to use a pre-paid debit card or a money transfer service.
- **Door-to-door solicitation:** In this scam, individuals go door-to-door, claiming to be affiliated with the utility company. The scam artists often work in pairs, and have been characterized as very persistent. These individuals may inquire about the resident’s electric service or rate, and ask to review a copy of the current electric bill or other documents. Police and media reports indicate that in some cases, after distracting the resident, these individuals have stolen property and personal information.
- **Bogus fees for equipment:** Customers have reported receiving phone calls demanding a separate payment to replace an electric meter or other equipment. In many cases, the caller threatens customers with disconnection unless an immediate payment is made.

“Customers who have questions about their account status or the identity of someone who claims to be one of our employees should immediately call our customer contact centers,” Grant said. “We also urge customers to report any suspicious activity to the police, and to let us know if they believe they have been targeted by a scam.”

Customers are encouraged to share this information with friends and family to continue raising awareness of these crimes, and to revisit the Scam and Fraud Information page on FirstEnergy’s website periodically to check for updates on emerging scam activity.

In addition to understanding how criminals target their victims, the website offers reminders to help ensure customer safety and security, including:

- FirstEnergy employees will not contact customers to request sensitive information such as social security numbers or bank account information, and they will not demand immediate payment over the phone. Customers who are behind on their accounts receive written notice of their account status, along with instructions on how to avoid a disconnection of service.
- Do not allow anyone claiming to be a utility employee into your home unless an appointment has been scheduled and the employee has provided proper identification.
- FirstEnergy's utilities offer a wide array of billing and payment options, and will never insist on a particular method of payment. Only send your payments to your FirstEnergy utility company.
- If you have any doubts about the status of your electric account or the identity of a company representative, call your utility company using the numbers below, which are also listed on FirstEnergy's website.

Utility Company Customer Service Numbers:

Ohio Edison	1-800-633-4766
The Illuminating Company	1-800-589-3101
Toledo Edison	1-800-447-3333
Met-Ed	1-800-545-7741
Penelec	1-800-545-7741
Penn Power	1-800-720-3600
West Penn Power	1-800-686-0021
Jersey Central Power & Light	1-800-662-3115
Mon Power	1-800-686-0022
Potomac Edison	1-800-686-0011

FirstEnergy is dedicated to safety, reliability and operational excellence. Its 10 electric distribution companies form one of the nation's largest investor-owned electric systems, serving customers in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, Maryland and New York. Follow FirstEnergy on Twitter @FirstEnergyCorp.

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