

U.S Energy Companies Warn Customers: Scammers Want Your Money DON'T GIVE IT TO THEM

NEW YORK – Con Edison is joining with energy companies across the country to get word to customers that they need to be cautious about people who call their home or business demanding an instant payment.

Scam callers posing as Con Edison representatives are an ongoing, frequent and dangerous problem for the company's customers. The company receives dozens of complaints each week about calls to customers' homes and businesses from scammers demanding immediate payment and threatening a service shutoff.

Con Edison and more than two dozen companies have formed a partnership seeking to warn customers not to fall for the scams.

The companies are calling Nov. 16 "Utilities United Against Scams Day." The day will be part of a week-long campaign to provide customers with information on the tricks scammers use, and tips customers can use to protect themselves.

(Podcast: Listen to Con Edison officials talk about how customers can avoid being scammed: <http://bit.ly/2fMW7vM>)

Scam callers claiming to be from Con Edison often tell a customer that service is going to be shut off due to unpaid bills unless the customer purchases a pre-paid card or arranges for a transfer via MoneyGram to pay a bill.

These callers are not from Con Edison and Con Edison does not accept payments of electric or gas bills by pre-paid debit cards, by MoneyGram or similar transfers.



The scammers sometimes even tell the customer about a store near the customer's home or business that sells pre-paid cards. The scammer instructs the customer to pay cash to put money on the card and to then provide the number on the card to the person who called.

Once the customer provides the scammer with the card number, the scammer steals the money.

There have even been reports of these scammers making a Con Edison phone number show up on the customer's caller ID.

With MoneyGram, scammers may ask a customer to provide money from a bank account, credit card or debit card by going online or to a specified location. The money goes into someone else's bank account or is available for the receiver to pick up in cash.

Be alert if anyone asks you by telephone to arrange for pre-paid debit cards or a MoneyGram transfer as payment for your bill, or to send money to an out-of-state address. Never arrange payment or divulge account or personal information, including debit or credit card information, over the telephone, unless you are certain you are speaking to a Con Edison representative.

Con Edison urges customers to never provide a Social Security number, credit card number or banking information to anyone requesting it unless you initiated the contact and know the identity of the person you are speaking with.

Anyone who feels they may have been a target of a payment scam should call their local police department. They may also call Con Edison at 1-800-75CONED.

For more information on avoiding scams, go to <http://conedscamalert.com/>. Con Edison's website, <http://www.coned.com/customercentral/managemybill.asp>, offers a variety of approved and convenient options for bill payment.

Con Edison is a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc. [NYSE: ED], one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies, with approximately \$13 billion in annual revenues and \$47 billion in assets. The utility provides electric, gas and steam service to more than three million customers in New York City and Westchester County, New York.