

New Year - Same Old Scams

Eversource and Better Business Bureau offer ways to avoid becoming a victim in 2019.

BERLIN, Conn. (January 28, 2019) – The New Year is in full swing and so are scams targeting utility customers across the country and right here in Connecticut. Already this year, customers in many towns around the state have been approached by scammers, either on the phone or at their door. To warn customers, Eversource and Better Business Bureau Serving Connecticut are teaming up to ensure that people know the telltale signs of scams, so they can avoid becoming a victim.

“The scammers, often sounding legitimate and quite convincing, threaten to shut off electric service immediately unless instant payment is made,” said Eversource Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer Penni Conner. “These scammers can be relentless but they’re only successful if they catch our customers off-guard and scare them into making a payment. We remind customers, if something doesn’t sound right or feel right, trust your gut, and don’t pay.”

With the increase in scams across the country, BBB offers ScamTracker which is a national tracking system that provides up-to-date information on the latest scams. The tool allows consumers to submit scam reports and see what scams are happening right in their backyard. BBB uses ScamTracker to investigate when increased fraudulent activity is reported in a particular area.

“One similarity in many scams, including utility scams, is a sense of urgency. Scammers often convince consumers that payment must be made immediately and that is always a red flag,” says Better Business Bureau Spokesperson for Connecticut Luke Frey. “The more we educate consumers on the basic red flags of a scam, the least likely they are to become victims.”

Tips to help avoid becoming a victim:

- Eversource representatives never demand instant payment over the phone, require the use of pre-paid debit cards or request customers meet at a payment center to make the payment.
- Never provide personal financial or account information to any unsolicited person on the phone, at the door or online, even if they seem legitimate.
- Beware, some sophisticated scammers can manipulate their caller ID to say the caller is with Eversource.
- Customers who are scheduled for disconnection due to nonpayment receive a written notice that includes information on how to maintain their service.
- Customers can verify they are speaking with an Eversource representative by asking for some basic information about their account like the name on the account, the account address, and the exact past due balance.

Eversource urges anyone who has doubts about the legitimacy of a call, visit or an offer, to contact the company directly at 1-800-286-2000. Eversource.com provides more information on how to protect personal information and avoid being a victim of utility scams.