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FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:
KRISTIN RUDMAN, (202) 508-5155**

Award Winning Utilities United Against Scams Recognizes the Third Annual Utility Scam Awareness Day

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 9, 2018) – The award-winning Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS), a consortium of more than 100 U.S. and Canadian electric, water, and natural gas utilities (and their respective trade associations), continues to raise awareness of utility scams targeting customers. The third annual Utility Scam Awareness Day will be held Wednesday, November 14, and is supported by a week-long advocacy and awareness campaign focused on exposing the tactics scammers use to steal money from utility customers and on educating customers on how to protect themselves.

“To better protect customers, it is critically important we continue to raise awareness and educate customers about scams,” said Duke Energy’s Vice President of Customer Operations for Piedmont Natural Gas and Metering Services and UUAS Chairman Jared Lawrence. “Scammers are developing increasingly sophisticated schemes to take advantage of customers. Through the ‘7 Scams in 7 Days’ campaign UUAS will highlight the most common scam tactics and provide resources to help utility customers better protect themselves from utility impostor scammers.”

UUAS’ International Utility Scam Awareness Week campaign, highlighting “7 Scams in 7 Days” will be held from November 11 – 17, 2018.

“Utilities provide vital services to hundreds of millions across the US and Canada and UUAS is working tirelessly to combat impostor utility scams that attempt to profit from our customers,” said National Grid’s Vice President of Regulatory and Customer Strategy and UUAS Executive Committee Vice Chair Sheri Givens. “It is critical that we continue to work collaboratively across the utility industry to safeguard our customers against scams.” “Utility services are vital to our everyday lives and UUAS is working to combat impostor utility scams, as scammers are continually attempting to profit from utility customers.”

UUAS and its member companies have helped to shut down more than 2,200 Toll-Free Numbers used by scammers against utility customers. The group was recently awarded the Toll-Free Industry’s Fraud Fighter Award in recognition of its advocacy and awareness campaign to stop scams that target electric, water, and natural gas company customers. UUAS was presented the award on October 10th at the Toll-Free User Summit hosted by Somos, Inc., in Las Vegas.

Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud or who feel threatened during contact with one of these scammers should contact their utility company or local law enforcement authorities. Also, customers should never purchase a prepaid debit card or gift card to avoid service disconnection or shutoff. Legitimate utility companies do not specify how customers should make a bill payment and always offer a variety of ways to pay a bill, including accepting payments online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail, or in person.

If someone calls, texts, appears, or emails saying you have to pay your bill immediately to avoid disconnection, tell them you would like to verify that they are a legitimate utility company representative by calling a verified number for the utility company found on the company's website or on your monthly bill. The Federal Trade Commission's website is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information and educate yourself on the different types of impostor scams.

Visit www.utilitiesunited.org for more information and tips about how customers can protect themselves from impostor utility scams or follow along on social media: **Twitter** @U_U_A_S and **Facebook** @UtilitiesUnited.

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Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) is a consortium of more than 100 U.S. and Canadian electric, water, and natural gas utilities (and their respective trade associations). UUAS is dedicated to combating impostor utility scams by providing a forum for utilities and trade associations to share data and best practices, in addition to working together to implement initiatives to inform and protect customers.