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## **Utilities United Against Scams Recognizes Sixth Annual Utility Scam Awareness Day on November 17**

**WASHINGTON (November 15, 2021)** – Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) this week will support [International Fraud Awareness Week](#) and recognize the sixth annual Utility Scam Awareness Day, which will take place on Wednesday, November 17. Utility Scam Awareness Day is an advocacy and awareness campaign focused on educating customers and exposing the tactics used by scammers. This year’s theme is ‘End the Call. End the Scam.’

UUAS, a consortium of nearly 150 U.S. and Canadian electric, water, and natural gas utilities and their respective trade associations, continues to raise customer awareness of common scams and new scam tactics being used by utility impostors. Through its work and with the help of customer reporting, UUAS has successfully helped to take nearly 12,000 toll-free numbers used by scammers against utility customers out of operation.

“Scammers have not shown compassion for small businesses and private citizens enduring the trying circumstances of the last two years,” said Jared Lawrence, UUAS founder and Duke Energy Vice President of Metering Services and Customer Service Transformation. “In fact, they have intensified their criminal activity with high pressure tactics and increasing use of technology. For that reason, utilities continue to unite to combat scammers by spreading awareness and are working with telecom partners to remove access to phone lines and encouraging policymakers to adopt stronger public protections.”

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, utilities have seen an increase in reported scammers who are contacting customers seeking payments and personal and financial information to avoid service interruptions. As a reminder, utilities will never ask for payments using a pre-paid debit card, gift card, cryptocurrencies, or third-party digital payment mobile applications, and they will provide multiple notices before service interruptions.

“It’s perfectly acceptable for the customer to hang up the phone. The scammer’s initial goal is to pressure their targets and convince them that they work for the utility,” said UUAS Executive Director Monica Martinez. “Scammers are extremely sophisticated in their tactics, and, by simply ending the call, you can end their scam. If you are unsure, you can always call back the utility by dialing the number found on your bill or on their website, and they will provide you with the correct information.”

Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud or who feel threatened during contact with a scammer should contact their local utility company or law enforcement authorities. The [Federal Trade Commission](#) also provides additional information about protecting personal information and other information regarding impostor scams.

Visit [www.utilitiesunited.org](http://www.utilitiesunited.org) for information and tips on how customers can protect themselves from impostor utility scams. Follow along with UUAS on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and join the conversation by using [#StopScams](#).

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*Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) is a consortium of nearly 150 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.*