



Burbank, Glendale & Pasadena Alert Public to Utility Scam *“Scammers threaten to cutoff power unless victims pay alleged overdue bill.”*

BURBANK, Calif. (November 5, 2015) – The Cities of Burbank, Glendale, and Pasadena are joining forces to inform the public about an ongoing utility scam that has claimed victims in all three cities.

In a recent two week period, Burbank Water and Power logged more than 40 incidents in which customers reported receiving illicit phone calls from people posing as utility employees. The scammers attempt to convince their victim that their power is about to be turned off unless they make an immediate payment of hundreds, and sometimes thousands of dollars. It’s a scam that has affected utility customers in Pasadena and Glendale as well. Since utilities are ubiquitous, the scam can occur in virtually any community in Southern California.

In addition to targeting residential customers, scammers frequently target businesses during peak operating hours. The caller will often use “spoofing technology” to make the caller ID appear as if it’s coming from the utility’s phone number. The caller usually instructs the victim to go to a store and purchase a pre-paid debit card. Once the card is loaded with funds, the victim will call the scammer and share the pre-paid card information.

It’s important for utility customers to know that the utility company does not accept payment in this manner and will never call and threaten to immediately shut down power. Service disconnection only occurs after a lengthy process. When an account is delinquent, multiple written notices are sent to the customer before service is discontinued.

If someone calls and threatens to disconnect the utility service, potential victims are urged to end the call immediately. Do not call the number on the phone’s caller ID. Rather, call your utility company or police department to report the incident. To confirm that your account is in good standing, contact the utility using the number on your bill or official utility website.

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