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**FOR INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
**SAMANTHA PHILLIPS, (202) 508-5136**

## **Utilities United Against Scams Recognizes Seventh Annual Utility Scam Awareness Day on November 16**

**WASHINGTON (November 14, 2022)** – Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) this week will support International Fraud Awareness Week and recognize the seventh annual Utility Scam Awareness Day, which will take place on Wednesday, November 16. Utility Scam Awareness Day is an advocacy and awareness campaign focused on educating customers and exposing the tactics used by scammers.

UUAS, a consortium of more than 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 13,000 toll-free numbers used by scammers against utility customers out of operation.

“Utilities will continue to unite to combat scammers by spreading awareness and by working with telecom partners to remove access to phone lines for reported scammers. We encourage policymakers to adopt stronger public protections and encourage private citizens and small businesses to stay vigilant against scams,” said Bud Ajdukovic, UUAS Chair and Kissimmee Utility Authority manager of Customer Service. “Scams are on the rise, and these opportunistic criminals have used past crises such as the pandemic and natural disasters to target customers and small businesses when they are most vulnerable.”

In recent years, utilities have seen an increase in reported scammers who are contacting customers seeking payments and personal and financial information while threatening service interruptions. These are known as utility impostor scams. 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.

“Scammer tactics are becoming increasingly sophisticated, but utility impostor scams are oftentimes as simple as a scammer posing as a customer’s local utility, calling and threatening to shut off their service unless they provide payment,” said Monica Martinez, executive director of UUAS. “Customers shouldn’t be afraid to end a call that they suspect is a scam. You can always end the call and dial the number on your utility’s bill or on the utility website to confirm. Most utilities will send overdue notices in the mail rather than by calling, and they always provide several notices that help educate customers about the options available to help them manage financial hardships.”

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

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 more than 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.*