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## **UUAS Warns Customers About New Scam Trend During National Consumer Protection Week**

**WASHINGTON (March 3, 2024)** – This week, Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) is supporting the Federal Trade Commission’s (FTC’s) annual [National Consumer Protection Week](#) along with more than 100 federal, state, and local agencies; consumer groups; and national advocacy organizations.

UUAS is dedicated to working with its members and partners, including the FTC, to inform customers about scams and to support initiatives to combat scammers. Utility impostor scammers pretend to represent electric, natural gas, water, and sewer utilities as a way to steal customers’ money and personal information. They approach customers through a variety of methods, including texts, phone calls, in-person visits, and emails. Scammers often will demand payment and threaten service disconnection, claiming a customer is past due on their utility bill.

“UUAS and our members are committed to educating customers about utility scams,” said UUAS Executive Director Monica Martinez. “Customers should be aware that scammers are using more advanced digital tactics to target them. A more recent scam uses fraudulent websites that are identical to a utility payment page and that are promoted on search engines to trick customers into clicking the page and making a payment.”

Customers who suspect they have been contacted by a scammer should alert their local utility and law enforcement.

Here are general tips to avoid being scammed:

- **Protect personal information:** Never provide personal information, including your date of birth, to anyone who initiates contact with you, claiming to be a utility company representative. They may ask you to confirm this information if you contact them first, but they will never initiate contact with you asking for this information.
- **Take your time:** If a request for payment is unexpected or seems suspicious, end the conversation and contact your utility using the verified phone number on a recent bill or the utility’s website to check the true status of your account.
- **Only make payments through a verified phone number or website:** Remember your utility will never ask you to make a payment through methods like a prepaid debit card, a gift card, cryptocurrency, or through third-party digital payment mobile applications.

For more information and tips on how to protect against utility scams, please visit the [UUAS website](#). The [FTC's website](#) also provides additional information about protecting personal information and other information regarding impostor scams.

Follow UUAS on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) 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.*