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Utilities United Against Scams Recognizes Fourth Annual Utility Scam Awareness Day on November 20

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 15, 2019) – Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) will recognize the fourth annual Utility Scam Awareness Day on Wednesday, November 20. Utility Scam Awareness Day is part of the week-long National Scam Awareness Week, an advocacy and awareness campaign focused on educating customers and exposing the tactics used by scammers. This year’s theme is ‘It Happened to Me, Don’t Let it Happen to You.’

UUAS, a consortium of more than 140 U.S. and Canadian electric, water, and natural gas utilities and their respective trade associations, has helped to create awareness of common and new scam tactics and to cease operations of nearly 5,000 toll-free numbers used against utility customers by scammers.

“While our Utilities United Against Scams consortium has made significant progress during our four years of work to educate and protect customers, the criminals targeting our communities continuously adapt and occasionally fool even the most sophisticated customers. While it is heartbreaking to hear from individuals and businesses who have lost money to scammers, we appreciate their willingness to share their experiences so that others might not fall victim,” said Jared Lawrence, vice president of customer operations at Duke Energy, and UUAS founder and executive committee chair.

It is not uncommon for scammers to call, text, or email utility customers asking for immediate payment to avoid service disconnection. As a reminder, utilities will never send a single notification to a customer within one hour of a service interruption, and they never will ask their customers to make payments with a pre-paid debit card, gift card, or any form of cryptocurrency.

"Utilities United Against Scams wants to stress that anyone from small business owner to senior citizen can fall victim to a utility impostor scam, in fact roughly 60 percent of scams reported to our members are from business customers," said UUAS Executive Director Monica Martinez, who was a former regulator at the Michigan Public Service Commission. "Education is the best way to stop these fraudulent scams."

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’s [website](#) also provides additional information about protecting personal information and other information regarding impostor scams.

Visit www.utilitiesunited.org for more information and tips on how customers can protect themselves from impostor utility scams, and follow along with UUAS on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) is a consortium of more than 140 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.