

# It's Utility Scam Awareness Week: Learn the Telltale Signs

PSE&G urges customers to think twice if someone threatens to immediately shut off their power

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## Slow down

Take your time. Scammers pressure customers to act fast.



## Verify

Scammers often pose as the utility. Always verify the info being provided to you matches your latest bill.



## Stop

Utilities never demand immediate payment and do not accept bitcoin, prepaid cards, or third-party payment apps.

NEWARK, N.J., November 17, 2021 /3BL Media/ PSE&G will join Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) to recognize the sixth annual Utility Scam Awareness Week, Nov 15-19. National Scam Awareness Week is an advocacy and awareness campaign focused on educating customers and exposing the tactics used by scammers.

"The pandemic has created financial hardship and escalated stress levels for many of our customers, and that is a perfect environment for scammers to thrive," said Deb Affonsa, PSE&G's vice president Customer Care and chief customer officer. "Bad actors create the impression of an urgent problem in the hopes that our customers will panic, preventing our customers from seeing all the clues that they are indeed being scammed. I would like to reinforce, PSE&G is not currently shutting off residential customers for nonpayment. PSE&G wants to help all our customers who are behind on their energy bills with affordable payment agreements to help our customers get **back on track, together.**"

PSE&G reminds customers to be alert to scams – particularly scams demanding immediate bill payment via a prepaid credit card or digital money transfer, or offering a

bill discount due to a good payment history.

### **What to look out for:**

- You receive a call from what looks like PSE&G on your caller ID.
- The caller threatens to shut off your service and demands an immediate payment by cash, pre-paid card, or digital money transfer apps.
- The caller informs you that you require a new meter and demands a deposit before the installation can occur (PSE&G does not require a deposit for a new meter installation).
- You're given a phone number to call back that, when called, may sound similar to PSE&G's automated call system.
- The caller alerts you that, because of your good bill-paying history, you're eligible for a bill reduction or discount but you must provide information first.

PSE&G never requires payment with a prepaid card and does not offer bill discounts. As another reminder, PSE&G does not accept payment via prepaid gift cards, digital money transfer apps or cryptocurrency such as Bitcoin.

### **What PSE&G will and won't discuss over the phone:**

- A genuine PSE&G representative will ask to speak to the account owner.
- If that person is available, the representative will explain why they are calling and provide the account name, address and current balance.
- If the account owner is not available, the PSE&G representative will not discuss the account at all and ask that a message be left for the Customer of Record to call **1-800-436-PSEG** (7734).

For more information, visit [pseg.com/scamalert](https://pseg.com/scamalert).

"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."

PSE&G is a member of the UUAS collaborative. UUAS, a consortium of more than 145 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.

**PSE&G** Public Service Electric & Gas Co. (PSE&G) is New Jersey's oldest and largest gas and electric delivery public utility, serving three-quarters of the state's population. PSE&G is the winner of the ReliabilityOne Award for superior electric system reliability in the Mid-Atlantic region. In 2020, PSE&G was named the most trusted combined gas & electric utility in the East Region, by the Cogent Syndicated Brand Trust Index. PSE&G is a subsidiary of Public Service Enterprise Group Inc. (PSEG) (NYSE:PEG), a diversified energy company. PSEG has been named to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for North America for 13 consecutive years (

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