



FOR RELEASE

## Learn to Spot and Stop Utility Scams

*PSE&G shares how customers can protect themselves against scammers*

**(NEWARK, N.J. – November 14, 2022)** Scammers continue to impersonate PSE&G representatives and take advantage of unsuspecting victims. [PSE&G](#) urges customers to understand scammers' tactics and know what to do if confronted with a request for private account information or a demand for immediate payment. If customers are ever in doubt about the legitimacy of a contact from PSE&G, they should call PSE&G at 800-436-PSEG (7734).

Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) is supporting **International Fraud Awareness Week**, and will recognize the seventh annual **Utility Scam Awareness Day on Wednesday, November 16**. Utility Scam Awareness Day was designated to raise awareness, educate customers, and expose the tactics used by scammers.

"Protecting our customers is a top priority. It is critically important we continue to raise awareness and educate customers about how to spot and stop potential scams," said David Johnson, PSE&G chief customer officer and vice president of Customer Care. "Scammers continue to adapt and develop increasingly sophisticated tactics to take advantage of our customers."

According to information provided to PSE&G by its customers in 2022 - roughly 1,000 customers reported they were a victim of a utility scam or scam attempt.

Scammer tactics are becoming increasingly sophisticated, but utility impostor scams are oftentimes as simple as a scammer posing as a customer's local utility representative in person or over the phone.

"Customers shouldn't be afraid to end the interaction if they suspect it is a scam. You can always call PSE&G to confirm," said Johnson. "Customers will always receive prior notification of past-due balances on their PSE&G bill, and by mail, email or phone, before the possibility of service disconnection. We also work hard to educate about the options available to help them pay their bill."

[PSE&G](#) urges customers to learn how to **spot** and **stop** potential utility scam activity.

### Signs of potential utility scam activity:

- **Threat to disconnect:** Scammers may aggressively tell the customer their utility bill is past due and service will be disconnected if a payment is not made — usually within an hour.

- **Request for immediate payment:** Scammers may instruct the customer to purchase a prepaid card, a gift card or even Bitcoin, and then to call them back to make a phone payment. They may request that the customer use a payment app to make an online payment, or even give instructions for an in-person meeting. Many times, after the customer makes the first payment, the scammer will call back to ask for the payment to be resubmitted due to an error with the amount. The scammer refers to a new amount and claims that the original payment will be refunded.
- **Request for card information:** If a customer calls back with requested information, the scammer asks the customer for the prepaid card's number or gift-card PIN, which grants the scammer instant access to the card's funds, and the victim's money is gone.
- **In person-demands:** Scammers may arrive at a home or business, flash a fake ID and/or claim to be a utility collection representative. The impostors may wear "uniforms" or affix false company signs to their vehicles. The scammers generally ask for personal information or offer discounts, which a real PSE&G representative would not do.

### **Protect yourself against utility scams:**

- Be alert to the telltale sign of a scam: someone asking by telephone or email for payment in pre-paid debit cards or fund transfer app, or to send money to an out-of-state address.
- Never arrange payment or provide account or personal information, including Social Security numbers or debit/credit card information, in person or over the telephone unless you are certain you are speaking to a PSE&G representative.
- Customers should also know what PSE&G will and won't discuss over the phone. A genuine PSE&G representative will ask to speak to the "Customer of Record." If that person is available, the representative will explain why they are calling and provide the account name, address and current balance. If the person on the phone does not provide the correct information, it is likely the customer is not speaking with a PSE&G representative.
- If the "Customer of Record" 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 1-800-357-2262.
- If customers have doubts about the legitimacy of a call or an email — especially one in which payment is requested — they should call PSE&G directly at 1-800-436-PSEG (7734).

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

### **How to identify a PSE&G employee in your neighborhood:**

- Typically, any employee working in your neighborhood will be in a vehicle that displays the PSE&G logo. In some cases, meter readers and contractors working on behalf of PSE&G may drive their personal cars.
- All employees are required to wear company-issued identification badges around their neck or on their belt. They should introduce themselves as a way to establish their identity.
- If you feel uneasy in a situation, ask them to wait outside and call PSE&G directly at 1-800-436-PSEG (7734) to verify if someone from PSE&G is in your area.

## Why a PSE&G employee or contractor might show up “unexpectedly”:

There are several situations when a PSE&G employee or contractor may show up unexpectedly, including to:

- Read or replace meters.
- Investigate a suspicious odor or gas leak.
- Complete field inspections of infrastructure.
- Attend to a customer’s high bill complaint.
- Respond to emergencies to shut off power for first responders.

For more information on how to identify a PSE&G employee or contractor, visit [Energize!](#)

\*Customers are not required to report utility scam attempts or losses to PSE&G. The data provided was voluntarily reported to PSE&G by the customers who experienced the scam or scam attempt.

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### **PSE&G**

*Public Service Electric & Gas Co. is New Jersey’s oldest and largest gas and electric delivery public utility, serving three-quarters of the state’s population, as well as one of the nation’s largest utilities. PSE&G has won the ReliabilityOne Award for superior electric system reliability in the Mid-Atlantic region for 20 consecutive years. PSE&G received the 2022 ENERGY STAR® “Partner of the Year” award in the Energy Efficiency Program Delivery category, and is a 2021 Customer Champion and Most Trusted Brand as named by Escalent. PSE&G is a subsidiary of Public Service Enterprise Group Inc., (PSEG) (NYSE:PEG), a predominantly regulated infrastructure company focused on a clean energy future and has been named to the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for North America for 14 consecutive years ([www.pseg.com](http://www.pseg.com)).*

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