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## **Iowa Utilities Board reminds customers to be aware of utility scams for payment, service disconnection**

(Des Moines) – With the holidays approaching the Iowa Utilities Board reminds utility customers to be aware of a variety of payment scams involving utility service. Scammers can target utility customers by phone, online, or by unscheduled in-person visits and may use aggressive tactics to demand immediate payment or threaten disconnection from electric or natural gas services.

These scams try to convince customers to purchase prepaid (Green Dot) cards, pay with a credit card, or provide other personal information. Iowa utility companies are required to provide advance notice to customers for potential service disconnection. The following tips may help utility customers avoid falling prey to scammers:

- Do not let an individual claiming to be a utility representative into your home unless you have scheduled an appointment and verified the identity of that person
- Do not give personal information to individuals demanding immediate payment by credit card or prepaid debit/credit cards when receiving suspicious phone calls, emails, or an unscheduled visit from individuals claiming to be a utility company representative
- Never provide your social security or credit card numbers, or bank account information to anyone during these calls, emails, or unannounced visits
- If someone calls or knocks on your door claiming to represent your utility and demands immediate payment or personal information, hang up, close and lock the door, and call the customer service number listed on your utility bill to verify the status of your account or whether an employee was dispatched to your location
- If you feel threatened by the caller, the email, or by the person at your door, end the contact immediately and call local police or 911

Customers can also report suspicious scam activity by contacting the Consumer Protection Division of the Iowa Attorney General's Office at: <https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/general-consumer-information/> or by calling 888-777-4590.

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*The Iowa Utilities Board regulates utilities to ensure that reasonably priced, reliable, environmentally responsible, and safe utility services are available to all Iowans.*

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