

Don't Fall Victim to Utility Scams

Every day, millions of Americans are targeted by scammers through phone calls, text messages, emails or face to face.

Scammers' tactics change daily, which is why it is important for consumers to stay on top of the latest scam reports from local and national news outlets, as well as local utility companies.

Utility customers around the country have been targeted through a phone scam where the callers demanded immediate payment and threaten to shut off power if the money is not received.

Klickitat PUD will never call you and demand immediate payment without notice.

We want you to be aware of two other trending scams.

One is the overpayment trick. A scammer contacts you, claims you have overpaid your utility bill and says they need your banking information to deposit the credit back to your checking account.

Don't fall for this. If you overpay your energy bill, KPUD automatically applies the credit to your account, which carries over to your next bill.



Another trending scam is smishing (short for SMS phishing). Many consumers know to watch out for suspicious emails, but we tend to trust text messages sent to our smartphones. Always question suspicious texts—especially from someone claiming to represent a utility.

KPUD only sends you important updates via text if you have signed up for our mobile alert/SMS program.

Watch out for other scams,

being aware of red flags.

Our increasingly connected world provides scammers with more opportunities to connect with unsuspecting consumers.

Be vigilant, and please report any utility scams to KPUD so we can let others in our community know.

Together, we can help prevent our friends and neighbors from being victimized. ■

- Our employees never show up at your door demanding payment on the spot. They will advise you to contact the office for payment or arrangements.
- Never give personal information to an unknown caller or visitor. Our representatives have access to the details they need to service your account.
- Demands for immediate payment by wire transfer, cryptocurrency, gift cards or cash reload cards should immediately raise red flags.
- If you think you've been contacted by a scammer falsely representing the utility, please let us know as soon as possible.

Three Tips for Dealing With Potential Scammers

Here are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you have been targeted by a scammer:

► **Take your time.**

Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency so you will act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.

► **Be suspicious.**

Scammers typically request immediate payment through a prepaid debit card or third-party app. This should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you are likely being targeted by a scammer.

► **Confirm before you act.**

If you are contacted by someone claiming to represent KPUD or another utility but you are unsure of the caller's identity, hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at 509-773-5891 or 509-493-2255.