

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



Utilities Unite to “Slam the Scam”

Representatives from Xcel Energy-Wisconsin and Eau Claire Energy Cooperative held a press conference at noon on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at the Xcel Energy-Sky Park location. Xcel Energy and Eau Claire Energy Cooperative are taking united front in raising awareness about the tactics being used to scam energy customers in Wisconsin.

Utilities across the country are reporting an increase in scams that are aimed at their customers. Scammers are using various tactics to con customers into providing payment or personal information, while posing as utility employees.

Utility scammers are using various tactics and have been known to:

- Tell you that your account is past due and that your utility service will be disconnected if immediate payment is not made.
- Require you to pay using a pre-paid debit card, specifically Green Dot MoneyPak cards that give instant and untraceable access to your funds.
- Manipulate caller ID's to display a fake number, which may actually be your utility's number. This tactic is called “spoofing.”
- Email you a phony utility bill that appears to be from your utility with an account number, amount due, due date and a link to allow you to make the payment.

Utilities across the nation are banding together to help customers identify a scam and prevent being a victim of such scams. Bottom line, if you feel a sense of urgency or feel threatened, we ask that you “Slam the Scam” by ending the conversation or not responding to an email communication. Please contact your utility directly to verify authenticity of anyone claiming to be a representative of your utility.

The following tips will help avoid you from being scammed:

- Never give out personal identifying information or financial information if you are unable to verify authenticity of the personal calling or emailing.
- Be suspicious if the person calling is asking for or is insisting that you make immediate payment or use a pre-paid debit card.
- Be aware that your utility will contact customers, by mail, regarding past due bills. Any notice of disconnection will occur in writing prior to your energy service being disconnected.
- If it just doesn't feel right, “slam the scam” and end the conversation. Contact your utility to verify your account status and report the scam using the phone number listed on a recent utility bill or company website.

For further questions regarding energy related scams, you may contact Dody Wubker at Eau Claire Energy Cooperative (715)832-1603 or 1-866-832-1604 x1229.

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is a member-owned and member-controlled electric cooperative celebrating 77 years of providing reliable and affordable electricity and related services more than 10,700 member-owners in Eau Claire County and portions of Chippewa, Dunn, Pepin, Buffalo, Trempealeau and Jackson Counties. We are a Touchstone Energy® cooperative and a member-owner in the Dairyland Power Cooperative system of electric cooperatives that generates and transmits reliable electric power in 62 counties of four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois).