



Common Utility Scams Include:

Threats to 'Shut Off Utilities'

Be wary of threats to shut off utilities immediately if a payment is not received. A notice must be provided before a utility company disconnects a service. Also, a disconnection will not happen outside of normal business hours.

Utility Worker Imposters

Don't automatically trust someone who knocks on the door and claims to be there to reset, replace or inspect a utility-related device. Imposters who are welcomed inside may try to divert attention while stealing items from the home. If access to a home is required, a utility company will warn the resident and confirm an appointment prior to arriving. Always ask for identification from anyone requesting to enter your home.

Identity Theft

Fraudsters may set up utility services using someone else's name or identity with no intention of paying the bill. Check detailed reports from the three major credit agencies to monitor suspicious account openings of new water, gas cable or waste services.

False Refunds or Discounts

Always thoroughly review documents before signing or giving away personal information. Scammers may promise false refunds, free products or services. An account will be automatically credited if an overpayment occurred—not requiring additional personal information.

Florida Attorney General's Office Scams at a Glance: Power-Off Fraud

Visit MyFloridaLegal.com to find consumer tips or to file a complaint.

Report fraud by calling
1-866-9-NO-SCAM
(1-866-966-7226)

View other Scams at a Glance
resources at:
MyFloridaLegal.com/ScamsAtAGlance

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MyFloridaLegal.com



Scams at a Glance: **Power-Off Fraud**



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Which Groups are the Most At-Risk for Utility Scams?

Utility scammers strategically choose targets. The most common groups targeted are seniors and non-native English speakers, but anyone who pays a utility bill can be targeted, so never let your guard down.

Tips to Avoid Utility Scams:



Understand that scammers pressure consumers to act fast, so take your time during a transaction.



Verify information given by the purported entity representatives by checking the latest bill.



Never provide personal information to a solicitor, whether online, by phone or in person.



Authenticate the identity of someone posing as a utility representative who comes to the door. Look for company ID and logo and know whether the visit is expected or not.



Know that utility companies will not demand immediate payment.



When in doubt if a call is legitimate, hang up and call the utility company directly using the number listed your monthly bill, or on the company's website.



Utility service providers will never ask for payment via wire transfer, prepaid debit cards or gift cards.



Ask detailed questions—most scammers won't be prepared to answer tough questions.

