



## OG&E continues to educate customers about utility scams

November 13, 2017

*Utility Scam Awareness Day is Nov. 15*

OKLAHOMA CITY— During the week of Nov. 13 – 17, OG&E will stand with utilities across the country to take part in a week-long advocacy and awareness campaign to inform and educate its customers on protecting themselves from utility scams. The campaign is supported through Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS), a consortium of more than 100 U.S. and Canadian utilities. UUAS will observe Utility Scam Awareness Day on Nov. 15.

Many utility customers throughout the country are being targeted by imposter utility scams each day. Scammers typically use phone, in-person and online tactics to target these customers. Scammers pose as utility employees and threaten that customers' services will be disconnected or shut off if they fail to make an immediate payment – typically using a prepaid card or other non-traceable form of payment.

Scammers can be very convincing and often target those who are most vulnerable, including senior citizens and low-income communities. They also aim their scams at small business owners during busy customer service hours.

"We've heard so many tragic stories of our customers losing money they couldn't afford to lose to these scammers, and we're doing everything we can to make sure others don't fall victim to their tactics," said Brian Alford, OG&E spokesman.

OG&E has created a web page, [www.oge.com/scams](http://www.oge.com/scams), that provides information about scam prevention and educates customers on the company's billing and collection processes. The company also regularly posts tips and information on its social media channels to educate customers about scam prevention.

"Impostor utility scams can be highly profitable to scammers and financially detrimental to consumers," said UUAS Executive Director and former Texas Utility Consumer Advocate Sheri Givens. "To prevent future crimes, it is important to educate community leaders and consumers on how to spot, avoid, and report scams."

### Signs of Potential Scam Activity:

- **Threat to disconnect:** Scammers may aggressively tell the customer his or her utility bill is past due and service will be disconnected if a payment is not made – usually within less than an hour.
- **Request for immediate payment:** Scammers may instruct the customer to purchase a prepaid card – widely available at retail stores – then call them back supposedly to make a bill payment to his or her utility company.
- **Request for prepaid card:** When the customer calls back, the caller asks the customer for the prepaid card's number, which grants the scammer instant access to the card's funds, and the victim's money is gone.

### How Customers Can Protect Themselves:

- Customers should never purchase a prepaid card to avoid service disconnection or shutoff. OG&E does not specify how customers should make a bill payment and always offers a variety of ways to pay a bill, including accepting payments online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail or in person.
- If someone threatens immediate disconnection or shutoff of service, customers should hang up the phone, delete the email or shut the door. Customers with delinquent accounts receive an advance disconnection notification. OG&E never sends a single notification one hour or less before disconnection.
- If customers suspect someone is trying to scam them, they should hang up, delete the email or shut the door. They should then call OG&E at the number on their monthly bill or the company's website, [oge.com](http://oge.com), not the phone number the scammer provides. If customers ever feel that they are in physical danger, they should call 911.

Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud, or who feel threatened during contact with one of these scammers, should contact local law enforcement authorities. The [Federal Trade Commission's website](http://www.ftc.gov), also is a good source of information about how to protect personal information.

Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company, a subsidiary of OGE Energy Corp. (NYSE: OGE), is Oklahoma's largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided customers in Oklahoma and western Arkansas the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes at rates below the national average. Our employees are committed to generating and delivering electricity, protecting the environment and providing excellent service to our more than 840,000 customers. OG&E has 6,700 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by low-sulfur coal, natural gas, wind and solar. OG&E is recognized as a leader in smart grid technology, leveraging this platform to provide customers with the award-winning SmartHours® program and setting the stage for an electric vehicle program that will include some level of public charging infrastructure, and advanced LED street and security lighting. OG&E employees live, work and volunteer in the communities we serve. For more information about OG&E, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.oge.com> or follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ogepower](https://www.facebook.com/ogepower) and Twitter: @OGandE.

UUAS is dedicated to combating impostor utility scams by providing a forum for utilities and trade associations to share data and best practices, in addition to working together to implement initiatives to inform and protect customers. Visit <http://www.utilitiesunited.org> for more information and tips about how customers can protect themselves from scams, or follow along on social media: Twitter @U\_U\_A\_S and Facebook @UtilitiesUnited.