



Tri-State EMC Warns of Utility Scams

The world, it seems, never lacks for folks who want to separate you from your hard-earned money. Electric cooperative members are some of the hardest working and most trusting people in the nation. Identity thieves and scammers have caught on to this and are preying on unsuspecting members by pretending to be co-op employees.

Tri-State EMC would like to warn members about a variety of scams that frequently target utility members. Reportedly, imposters call posing as TSEMC employees and insist you are delinquent on your bill and demand bill payment over the phone by credit card. Some scammers may not take no for an answer and repeatedly call back demanding money, getting more and more forceful each time. They may call late at night or on weekends when the local cooperative office is closed. They may rig caller ID to make it look like the call is from TSEMC and tell you to put money on a prepaid debit card and ask for the card number.

Never give out your personal information – credit card numbers, social security number or bank account numbers – over the phone unless you initiate the call. If anyone calls soliciting this information, hang up immediately and call your local police or sheriff's office.

Tri-State EMC employees never call and demand payment over the phone. Call us at (706) 492-3251 if you have questions about your account.

Other scams include federal assistance scams which feature a phony nationwide program that promises to credit or pay utility bills in exchange for personal information, including social security numbers. The scam, which has been reported in a number of states, claims that President Barack Obama is providing credits or applying payments to utility bills. Members are being reached by text messages, social media, and email.

There are other scams which involve emails containing mock links to online bills and ask for additional information before collecting payment. If you receive your bills online, compare your latest emails, and beware of links that redirect you to other websites. Remember, you can safely view your bills online by logging directly into your account at www.tsemc.net.

Being well informed can help you to avoid a scam. Call your local law enforcement if you suspect any scam.