

Don't Get Taken This Holiday Season

Scams Play on Holidays and COVID-19

CLINTON, Conn., — Dec. 23, 2020 — Connecticut Water reminds customers that scammers take advantage of the hectic and often stressful holiday season, and this year COVID-19 could make it worse.

“Customers and the general public should be on the lookout for utility scams so they can protect themselves and their property,” stated Arthur J. O’Neill, vice president of customer service at Connecticut Water.

The types of scams that Connecticut Water has seen most often fall into two categories.

Scam No. 1 – Scammers Posing as Utility Workers

Scammers pose as water utility employees who say they need to enter the home to check the water meter. This scam usually involves two people. Once they are in the home, one distracts the homeowner while the other looks for unguarded valuables.

Prevention

Connecticut Water employees carry photo identification and drive vehicles marked with the company logo. They will gladly show their ID when requested to, and they will be happy to wait while the customer calls 800-286-5700 to verify their identity and the nature of the work they are going to perform.

In addition, O’Neill explained, “Connecticut Water created its industry-leading Be Sure Before You Open the Door program out of concern for the safety of its customers. Prior to a scheduled appointment, we are able to send an email with a photo of our employee to the customer before the employee knocks on the door — giving the customer confidence it is a real Connecticut Water employee at the door.”

O’Neill adds, “Customers have every right to verify that a person who knocks on their door claiming to be from a utility -- is really a utility employee. If the person at the door refuses to show a photo ID or wait while you call the company to verify their identity, customers should not let them in the home. Customers can also notify local authorities to help protect their neighbors.”

Scam No. 2 – Scammers Demand Immediate Payment to Stop Disconnection

Scammers threaten to disconnect or shut off water service if a customer fails to make an immediate payment — typically using a prepaid card or another nontraceable form of payment.

Prevention

Connecticut Water does not collect money in the field and will never ask customers to purchase a prepaid card. Customers can pay their bill online, through the mail by check or over the phone at 800-286-5700 by credit card.

In addition, customers with a past-due balance can enroll in a 24-month, interest-free payment plan with no fees or down payment required through Feb. 9, 2021, or until Gov. Ned Lamont lifts the COVID-19 public health emergency. Customers can check the status of their account at any time online or by calling Connecticut Water at 800-286-5700 during normal work hours.

O’Neill adds, “Customers have every right to verify that a person who knocks on their door claiming to be from a utility is really a utility employee. If the person at the door refuses to show a photo ID or to wait for their identity to be verified, customers should not let the person in the home. Customers can also notify local authorities to help protect their neighbors.”

Connecticut Water has a [fact sheet](#) at ctwater.com with eight tips on how customers can avoid being ripped off by scammers posing as utility workers.

About Connecticut Water Company

Connecticut Water Company provides water service to nearly 350,000 people in 60 Connecticut communities and wastewater service to 10,000 people in Southbury, Connecticut.

The towns served are Ashford, Avon, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Bolton, Brooklyn, Burlington, Canton, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Griswold, Guilford, Haddam, Hebron, Killingly, Killingworth, Lebanon, Madison, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Oxford, Plainfield, Plymouth, Portland, Prospect, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Southbury, Stafford, Stonington, Suffield, Thomaston, Thompson, Tolland, Vernon, Voluntown, Waterbury, Westbrook, Willington, Windsor Locks and Woodstock.

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