

Media Contact: David Song, (626) 302-2255

Utility Bill Scams Continue to Target Southern California Edison Customers

ROSEMEAD, Calif., July 25, 2013 — [Southern California Edison](#) (SCE) is advising customers to be aware of a [telephone scam](#) that demands immediate payment for allegedly past due electricity bills.

Imposters have been calling SCE customers telling them they must make immediate payment on past due bills or have their electric service disconnected. The callers are also demanding that payment be made through a prepaid cash card. Other forms of fraud involve customers being asked to purchase prepaid debit cards. Scammers ask for the debit card number and collect the value deposited on the card.

SCE customers have reported about 800 instances of phone scams this year. About 150 residential and commercial customers have been victimized by some form of bill scam with the incidents costing them an average of \$800 to \$1,000.

“We ask our customers to be alert to these calls that demand immediate payment and threaten service disconnection,” said Marlyn Denter, SCE manager of consumer affairs. “Customers suspecting a fraudulent call should ask for the caller’s name, department and business phone number. If the caller refuses to provide this information, customers should terminate the call and report the incident immediately to local police or SCE at 800-655-4555.”

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey, whose office prosecutes crimes in about 80 cities within SCE’s service territory, joins the utility in warning consumers about telephone scams.

“SCE and the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office share a common interest in keeping Los Angeles County residents safe from bill scams and other financial crimes,” Lacey said.

“A first step to preventing financial scams — particularly among the elderly and in ethnic communities — is to educate the public,” she said. “When these crimes do occur, the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office is fully committed to prosecuting them to the fullest extent of the law.”

SCE also reminds customers to ask for identification when a stranger comes to the door or calls claiming to be a utility worker. SCE utility workers will provide verification, including their department and phone number, when asked.

In most cases, home visits by SCE are scheduled by the customer and SCE will confirm the appointment in writing. If there are any concerns, SCE and law enforcement officials suggest having the utility worker wait outside until their identity can be verified.

SCE customers should also note that:

- An SCE employee will never ask for money in person.
- Never reveal your credit card, ATM or calling card numbers (or PIN numbers) to anyone.
- If someone calls and requests you leave your residence at a specific time for a utility-related cause, call the police. This could be a burglary attempt set up by the caller.
- Be suspicious of anyone who arrives at your house without an appointment asking to check an appliance, wiring or suggesting that there may be some other electrical problem inside or outside your residence.
- For more ways customers can stay safe, please see [sce.com/safety](https://www.sce.com/safety) and read the safety tips section.

About Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the United States. Each year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecutes more than 60,000 felonies and 140,000 misdemeanor crimes.

About Southern California Edison

An Edison International (NYSE:EIX) company, Southern California Edison is the largest electric utility in California, serving a population of more than 14 million via 4.9 million customer accounts in a 50,000-square-mile service area within Central, Coastal and Southern California.

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