



## Ameren Missouri Utilities Scams Awareness Tip Sheet

- Utility scammers offer fabricated services or threaten to disconnect power in an attempt to defraud both residential and business customers out of money.
- According to the Better Business Bureau, scams cost small businesses \$7 billion annually. Many scammers will try to target small businesses during peak hours, knowing that a service disruption can negatively impact the bottom line.
- Anyone is susceptible to a utility scam, but both elderly customers and those who may not speak English as a primary language are generally more vulnerable.
- The most commonly reported utility scam scenario involves a perpetrator who calls a residential or business customer and threatens to disconnect service if payment is not received immediately.
- It may seem intuitive that that is a utility scam, but discerning real from fake is often difficult. And nowadays, scammers are using even more advanced tactics (e.g. recordings mimicking Ameren customer service lines) to appear legitimate and sound convincing, leading potential victims to believe the requests are valid.
- There are several red flags that may signal a utility scam. Keep an eye and ear out for the following:
  - Threats to disconnect service without immediate payment. Ameren will never demand payment in this manner.
  - Unsolicited requests for personal and proprietary information. No one should ever call you unsolicited and request credit card information, your social security number, address or anything pertaining to your utility bill.
  - Non-Ameren numbers. Utility scammers oftentimes attempt to replicate the area code, but the legitimate Ameren numbers are 1-800-755-5000 and 1-800-552-7583.
  - Constant intimidation and pressure to make a payment. If the request is legitimate, the Ameren team member can always wait. Nobody should ever coerce you into payment.
  - Requests to pay with Green Dot Cards, MoneyPaks or other prepaid credit cards. These are attractive options for scammers, as it only takes a bit of information from the back of the card to irreversibly drain funds. However, Ameren Illinois will NEVER request payment in this manner.
- Although not as common, door-to-door utility scam attempts can occur. These scammers aren't necessarily threatening power disconnection, but instead, pedaling fake deals or promotions in exchange for personal or account information.
- If anyone claiming to be with Ameren Missouri or Ameren Illinois shows up at your home or business (in the absence of a previously scheduled appointment), ask to see their badge. Simply wearing Ameren-branded clothing is not enough.
- If you are contacted by a utility scammer (or are even suspicious), end the conversation immediately and contact Ameren Missouri at 1-800-5527538 or Ameren Illinois at 1-800-755-5000. Our customer care team will listen closely to your account of the situation and provide a report to Ameren Security to determine if additional investigation is needed. You can also put in a call to your local law enforcement.

###