



People's Energy Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Immediate NEWS RELEASE

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Scam Alert

ORONOCO, MN, September 14, 2022 — This afternoon, People's Energy Cooperative (PEC) received multiple reports of phone utility scams. Members describe being told that the Cooperative was overcharging them, and they were going to be refunded. However, to receive the refund, they needed to share their credit card number over the phone. It was also reported that the Cooperative's phone number was being spoofed as it appeared to them the call came from the Cooperative.

PEC employees will never request bank or payment information from members over the phone. Member service representatives will only ask for information to identify who a member is. Payment information can only be accepted through our secure automated phone system as well as through our online account management system, SmartHub.

The following are a few reminders on how to take control of the situation when you've been targeted by a scammer:

- **Take your time:** Utility scammers try to create a sense of urgency, so you'll act fast and hand over personal information, especially over the phone. Take a moment to think about the situation before acting.
- **Be suspicious:** Scammers typically request immediate payments through prepaid debit cards or third-party apps. Unusual requests like this should raise red flags. Remember, if the request seems strange and out of the ordinary, you're likely being targeted by a scammer.
- **Confirm before you act:** If you're contacted by someone claiming to represent People's Energy or another utility but you're unsure, just hang up the phone and call the utility directly. You can reach us at (800) 214-2694 to verify the situation.

About People's Energy Cooperative

People's Energy Cooperative is a member-owned electric cooperative celebrating 85 years of delivering retail electric power to its 19,000 consumer-members in Olmsted, Dodge, Fillmore, Mower, Wabasha, and Winona Counties. People's Energy Cooperative is a Touchstone Energy® cooperative and a member-owner in the Dairyland Power system of electric

cooperatives that generates and transmits reliable electric power in 62 counties of four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois). People's is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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