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NEWS

LPEA cautions customers of a new phone scam attempt *Dozens of businesses threatened with disconnection for lack of payment*

DURANGO, Colo. – La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) is once again cautioning its members to not be fooled by an impersonator, claiming to be from LPEA and threatening disconnection for lack of payment.

The new “twist” on the scam is that the Caller ID to members indicates the call is actually coming from LPEA. The current scam is targeting businesses in both Archuleta and La Plata counties.

“We’ve had many more calls from our customers than we’ve had in the past when scammers target LPEA, and we believe it’s because our name and number come up in the Caller ID,” said Dennis Svanes, LPEA CFO. “The caller wants immediate payment and threatens disconnection, but each of the requests has been different – some want money wired, some have told customers to get pre-paid credit cards, and others have requested a credit card number over the phone.”

In compliance with banking regulations, LPEA’s Customer Service Representatives do not accept credit card payments over the phone. If a member calls in to pay by credit card, the member is directed to a secure, automated voice system. Also, LPEA bills cannot be paid at grocery or drug stores, and LPEA never requires that money be immediately wired.

When an account is past due, LPEA customers receive a series of notices and are given adequate time to settle their bills before any disconnect would take place. If in doubt about a billing department phone call from LPEA or supposed authorized agent, customers are asked to politely end the conversation and call the LPEA Customer Service Department, 970.247.5786 or 888.839.5732, to clarify any billing questions. If the call is blatantly fraudulent, members should also call the local authorities.

LPEA, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative established in 1939, provides to its more than 30,000 members, with in excess of 42,000 meters, safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost, while being environmentally responsible.

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