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NEWS

LPEA cautions customers of new phone scam attempts

Businesses and individuals 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 impersonators claiming to be from LPEA and threatening disconnection for lack of payment.

“We’ve had a couple of different issues today,” said Steve Gregg, LPEA chief operating officer. “One concern is whether LPEA’s system has been ‘hacked’ and Social Security numbers and passwords stolen. Our Network Administrators are running checks on the system, and we’ve alerted our bill processing company, but there has been no evidence of any breaches.”

According to Gregg, all member data is encrypted to thwart hackers.

The phone scammers today are also calling members-in-good-standing threatening disconnection if payment is not made within 15 minutes.

“We heard from a business in Pagosa Springs,” said Betsy Lovelace, customer service supervisor. “They’d received a call from LPEA’s ‘corporate office’ in Denver. Fortunately the bookkeeper realized that LPEA is local. He asked for a call-back phone number and the scammer hung up.”

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 supposed billing department phone call from LPEA or 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.

In compliance with 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.

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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