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**ATTORNEY GENERAL WARNS: SCAMMERS TARGETING UTILITY CUSTOMERS**  
*AG and Vermont Power Companies Unite to Reassure Vermonters*

MONTPELIER -- Vermont Attorney General T.J. Donovan is warning Vermonters about a spike in scams by fraudsters pretending to be utilities. The Attorney General issued a “Scam Alert” and joins Vermont power companies in warning Vermonters about the scam.

These scammers call residents and businesses demanding immediate payment for electricity with a credit card, pre-paid card, or money order. Utilities reported a sharp increase in complaints from consumers this week. In response, the Attorney General issued a “Scam Alert” to over 4,000 Vermonters to warn them of this fraudulent activity.

“Our team is working with local utilities to raise awareness and stop these scams,” said Vermont Attorney General T.J. Donovan. “If any Vermonter is not sure about who is on the other end of the phone, you should not make a payment. Hang up and call the AG’s office or your local utility.”

Vermont utilities also issued statements warning consumers:

“We are focused on protecting our customers and providing them with information. We will never demand immediate payment over the phone and threaten to shut you off,” said Mary Morris, who leads Green Mountain Power’s customer service team. “We want to hear from you if you get a call that doesn’t feel right. Our toll free number is 1-888-835-4672.”

“At Burlington Electric, safety is our number one value,” said Mike Kanarick, Manager of Customer Care and Communications at Burlington Electric Department. “And, safety includes protecting the financial security of our customers and the Burlington community. If you ever doubt the identity of a person claiming to represent BED, please call our customer care team right away at 802-865-7300.”

“This is a terrible thing scammers are doing; they not only steal money but they leave the victim feeling violated and embarrassed,” said Patty Richards, General Manager of the Washington Electric Coop. “Anyone can fall victim. If you receive a call demanding immediate payment or using scare tactics, this is a scam,” she said. “When in doubt take action and hang up. You can always place a call directly to your electric utility and verify if you owe money,” said Richards.

“Always better to err on the side of caution,” said Sue Bernier, VEC’s manager of member services. “If you get a suspicious call asking you for personal information or payment, hang up and call your utility right away.”

To sign up for the VT Scam Alert, or to report a scam, call 1-800-649-2424 or visit the [Consumer Assistance Program](#). Those who have already signed up for Vermont Alert can receive scam alerts by adding that notification on their account at [www.vtalert.gov](http://www.vtalert.gov).

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