

## **ORANGE & ROCKLAND JOINS NATIONAL ANTI-SCAM CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT CUSTOMERS**

### ***Don't Be A Victim: Awareness Best Defense Against Scammers***

PEARL RIVER, NY, November 14, 2021 – Over the past year, criminals have been trying harder than ever to steal Orange & Rockland (O&R) customers' hard-earned money through a variety of scams and they show no signs of stopping.

To spread the word about this risk, O&R, and its subsidiary Rockland Electric Company, are joining Con Edison and more than 140 electric, natural gas and water providers from across North America in dedicating this week to educating customers on how they can avoid becoming scam victims. The companies, members of [Utilities United Against Scams](#), have declared the week of November 14 as **National Utility Scam Awareness Week** and Wednesday **Utility Scam Awareness Day**.

The theme of this year's campaign is *"End the Call, End the Scam."* **Customers who receive a suspicious call should hang up and dial O&R's Customer Service line at 1-877-434-4100 to determine whether the call was legitimate.**



**CAPTION:** Impostors sometimes show up at customers' homes, falsely claiming to be from O&R. These crooks try to get money by saying the customer is delinquent on bills or try to get inside the home by saying they need to perform work. If someone comes to your home claiming to be from O&R, ask for identification. If you are still unsure, call O&R at 1-877-434-4100 or the police.

One of the common ways professional criminals attempt to steal customers' money is to call a customer's home or business and say the customer owes money and must pay immediately via pre-paid card or a payment app, otherwise the customer will face a shutoff of service that day. The caller sometimes points the customer to a store that sells pre-paid cards, and they can even make an O&R telephone number show up on the customer's caller ID. They may even say the payment didn't go through and ask the customer to resend – resulting in multiple payments.

Other impostors show up at customers' homes and businesses claiming to be from O&R. These crooks try to get money by saying the customer is delinquent on bills or try to get inside the home by saying they need to perform work. Once inside a home, these impostors look for money or property to steal or, in some cases, commit assaults. **If someone comes to your home or business claiming to be from O&R, ask for their company identification. If you are still unsure, call O&R at 1-877-434-4100 or the police.**

**Here are three big reasons not to believe any caller or visitor who makes a shutoff threat:**

- **NO PRE-PAID DEBIT CARDS, WIRES OR PAYMENT APPS** – O&R does not accept bill payment for electric and gas utility bills by Green Dot or any other prepaid debit cards; nor MoneyGram or apps like Cash App, Venmo and Zelle.

- **NO IMMEDIATE SHUTOFF** - Disconnecting O&R electric or gas service for non-payment of bills involves a multi-step process – including written communications from O&R to the customer over a period of several days, or even weeks – not hours. That process is regulated by the NYS Public Service Commission and NJ Board of Public Utilities.
- **NO SHUTOFFS FOR NON-PAYMENT** – Because of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the NYS Public Service Commission and NJ Board of Public Utilities. have halted utility service shutoffs for non-payment until further notice. This measure is designed to aid those who have become unemployed or under employed because of COVID-19 to get back on their feet.

If you are unsure about whether you have an overdue balance on your O&R bill, the fastest way to find out is to log on to your account through [ORU.com/MyAccount](https://www.oru.com/MyAccount). You also can also O&R's automated phone system at 1-877-434-4100. Have your O&R account number ready and follow the prompts to check your balance.

### **About Orange & Rockland**

Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R), a wholly owned subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc., one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies, is a regulated utility. O&R provides electric service to approximately 300,000 customers in southeastern New York State (where its franchise name is Orange & Rockland) and northern New Jersey (where it's Rockland Electric Company) and natural gas service to approximately 130,000 customers in New York.