

## ORANGE AND ROCKLAND UTILITIES URGES CUSTOMERS:

### STAY INFORMED AND AVOID BEING SCAMMED

PEARL RIVER, NY November 18, 2024, 11:00 a.m. – As part of [International Fraud Awareness Week](#) starting November 17, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R) is joining forces with more than 150 U.S. and Canadian energy and water companies to help protect customers from fraud. The campaign is spearheaded by [Utilities United Against Scams](#), with November 20 recognized as Utility Scam Awareness Day.

O&R is urging customers to stay vigilant and learn to identify the tactics scammers use to pose as company employees. Scammers often demand immediate payment or personal information, creating a sense of urgency to trick their targets.

“Every year, scammers become more sophisticated and find new ways to trick people. We want our customers to know that there are simple ways to protect themselves,” said Janette Espino, O&R vice president of Customer Service. “Any demand for payment threatening immediate shut off or pressure to give up personal information is an instant red flag. Customers should immediately use the My Account portal at [oru.com](http://oru.com), available 24/7, to confirm their account status, or call the company directly.”

The following are signs that a person contacting an O&R customer is a scammer:

- People trying to pull a scam often try to sell a customer on urgency. They’ll say company personnel are on their way immediately to shut off service.
- Scammers call customers and instruct them to buy a pre-paid debit card. Once the customer puts money on the card and provides the scammer with the card number, the scammer steals the money. **O&R does not accept payment by pre-paid debit cards, MoneyGram or similar transfers.**
- Scammers contact customers and demand payment via apps like Cash App, Venmo, Zelle or even Bitcoin. **O&R does not support these platforms for payment.**
- A person who shows up at a home or business not wearing an O&R ID is not a company employee. An O&R employee will politely show the ID to the customer when asked. If you are still not sure the person works for the company, call O&R at 1-833-460-7059 to get confirmation.

Be aware, scammers who call customers by phone can even make an O&R phone number appear on a customer’s caller ID display.

When a customer gives money to a scammer, the scammer will often claim that the payment did not go through and demand another payment. The company has received reports of customers providing multiple payments totaling thousands of dollars to a scammer.

O&R’s website offers [approved options for bill payment](#). O&R accepts check, credit card or cash at an authorized payment location listed on our website.

Some utilities have reported an increase in utility impostor scams through digital methods, including search engine-related scams. Digital scam tactics include:

- Sponsored ads on search engines that lead to an identical - but fake - utility bill payment page.
- QR codes that scammers falsely claim link to a utility payment page.

- Texts from a scammer claiming to be a utility representative, with a link to an impostor payment page.

### **About O&R**

Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. (O&R) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc., one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies. O&R is a regulated utility that provides electric service to approximately 300,000 customers in southeastern New York State (where its franchise name is Orange and Rockland Utilities) and northern New Jersey (where it's Rockland Electric Company), and natural gas service to approximately 140,000 customers in New York.