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## Media advisory

For Release: Nov. 15, 2023

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### Regional utilities warn customers not to fall for payment scams

Today is Utilities United Against Scams Day, and Minnesota Power and Superior Water, Light and Power (SWL&P) are sharing tips and information to prevent customers from falling victim to scammers.

The most common scams are phone calls or emails telling a customer that service is going to be shut off due to unpaid bills unless the customer immediately purchases a pre-paid debit card, arranges for a transfer from bank accounts, or provides credit/debit card numbers to pay a bill. These scams often become more numerous as the heating season ramps up in November and energy bills rise.

In some instances, phone scammers manipulate caller ID to display a fake number, which may display as a Minnesota Power or SWL&P number. Emails may have a return address similar to mnpower.com or swlp.com. These calls and emails are not from either company and should not be acted upon.

Customers who think they are dealing with a suspicious call or email are advised to hang up immediately, not reply to or open the email, and call Minnesota Power at 800-228-4966 or SWL&P at 800-227-7957 to verify account status and to report this illegal activity. Minnesota Power and SWL&P don't want you to fall victim to a scam.

As a reminder, these are the normal procedures Minnesota Power and SWL&P follow for accounts with overdue bills:

1. Both companies contact customers behind on their bills with automated voicemails and written notices for payment before service is disconnected. After the written notices, Minnesota Power also will send a company representative with an identification badge to visit the customer to request payment or complete the disconnection. Customers who have not received a disconnection notice either electronically or in the mail should not engage with anyone on the phone or by email offering to take payment. Instead, customers should hang up and contact Minnesota Power at 800-228-4966 or SWL&P at 800-227-7957 to verify account status and report the attempted scam.
2. Both companies place courtesy calls for various business reasons. Minnesota Power leaves its 800-228-4966 number for a return call; SWL&P leaves its 800-227-7957 number for a return call. These are usually recorded calls and never demand immediate payment of an overdue bill.
3. Customers can pay their Minnesota Power or SWL&P bill by credit card or debit card by phone, on our website as a guest or through our MyAccount portals. To learn more about these and other



options for paying bills, go to <https://www.mnpower.com/CustomerService/PayOnline> or <https://www.swlp.com/CustomerService/PayOnline>.

4. Never give your personal information to strangers. If a call sounds suspicious, call Minnesota Power at 800-228-4966 SWL&P at 800-227-7957 to report your concerns to one of our customer representatives.

5. To further protect yourself, use only authorized methods listed at <https://www.mnpower.com/CustomerService/PayOnline> or <https://www.swlp.com/CustomerService/PayOnline> to pay your bill.

Anyone who feels they may have been a target of a payment scam should also contact their local police department. These types of scams are a nationwide problem and Minnesota Power and SWL&P have joined forces with other utility companies through Utilities United Against Scams to help warn customers not to fall for them. To learn more, go to <https://www.mnpower.com/Alerts> or <https://www.swlp.com/Alerts>.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 150,000 customers, 14 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at [www.mnpower.com](http://www.mnpower.com).

Superior Water, Light and Power provides electricity, water and natural gas in the city of Superior and adjacent areas in northwestern Wisconsin. The company has served the area since 1889 and provides services to approximately 15,000 electric customers, 13,000 natural gas customers and 10,000 water customers. More information can be found at [www.swlp.com](http://www.swlp.com).

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