

A black rotary telephone handset is hanging from a red wall. The handset is positioned vertically, with the receiver at the top and the base at the bottom. The red wall is the background, and the handset is the central focus of the image. The lighting is warm, highlighting the texture of the wall and the glossy surface of the handset.

Payment scams have become more prevalent as technology has developed over the years. With the increased capabilities of the internet, people have found new ways to cheat unsuspecting consumers out of their hard-earned money. SMECO wants to prevent scammers from victimizing customers. Protect yourself with tips to stay safe from scams.

**DON'T GET
TRICKED**

Remember these tips

You should know how much you owe on your bill and when payments are due. Electric utilities follow state regulations and have set schedules for billing and payment.

- SMECO will mail a termination notice if a bill is past due.
- SMECO calls customers who owe a past due balance using an automated phone system with a recorded message; rarely will SMECO employees make personal "collection" phone calls.
- Collection calls are made about 10 days before service is to be terminated. **SMECO does not require payment at the time of the call.**
- SMECO does not make collection calls or terminate service on weekends or holidays.
- If service is going to be terminated, a SMECO collector will knock on the customer's door before turning off service.
- SMECO collectors will accept credit card payments, checks, or money orders, but they do not accept cash, green dot, or pre-paid debit cards.

Because SMECO does initiate automated collection calls and customers can choose to make a payment over the phone, some phone calls are legitimate. Alternate energy suppliers and solar companies that are trying to conduct business legitimately may also contact customers to offer their services, but customers should never provide their account number to unauthorized callers.

SMECO wants to prevent phone scammers from victimizing customers by simplifying the payment process. SMECO has a number of ways customers can pay their bills that will help prevent confusion.

- Customers can use budget billing to pay the same amount every month.
- They can use AutoPay to have payments made automatically with a credit card or checking account.
- Customers can easily go online and make weekly payments if that helps them with their personal budget.

Our goal is to make it easy for customers to do business with SMECO, and we offer a variety of payment methods that are free and convenient. We also want our customer-members to protect themselves from scams, so remember these tips.

1-888-440-3311

smeco.coop/stop-scams

