

Utility Scams Target Unsuspecting Customers

Threats come from emails, calls and text messages

Even as COVID-19 restrictions are loosened, scammers are working hard to steal money from unsuspecting victims who may be struggling during the pandemic.

Scams can come in many forms, including through emails, phone calls and even text messages.

Hastings Utilities will never demand immediate payment via phone, email or text. Customers will always be notified multiple times about an unpaid bill before services will be shut off, and customers will be able to call the business office back at 402-463-1371 to learn how to provide payment. Customers may also pay their bills online at www.cityofhastings.org/departments/utilities/pay-my-bill/. You will never be ordered to stay on the phone line or risk having utility services shut off.

If you're targeted

If you feel like you're being targeted by a scammer, hang up and dial our legitimate phone number – scammers can disguise their phone number to look like ours when they call, but they cannot answer a call that comes to our real phone number.

Hastings Utilities will not send emails threatening an immediate utility shutoff, and customers should never reply with personal or financial information.

Customers will never be asked to pay a bill via gift card or other method of wire transfer. Money lost in these ways are often very difficult to recover once the customer realizes it's a scam.

If you know your utility bills are up to date, be extra cautious if you receive a call saying otherwise. Tell the person on the line that you'll call right back at the Hastings Utilities number at 402-463-1371 to ensure that the call is legitimate.

Bottom line

Always be on alert when you are contacted about an overdue utility bill, and ensure that you're communicating with a real Hastings Utilities representative before giving out any information. We would rather you take the time to hang up and call us back for your own peace of mind than risk losing your hard-earned money to a scammer.

Continued Monitoring of COVID-19

As COVID-19 restrictions continue to be lifted in our area, Hastings Utilities is monitoring the lingering effects. If you're having trouble paying your utility bill, please reach out at 402-463-1371 to work out a payment plan.