

O&R SCAM ALERT: CROOKS ARE CALLING TO STEAL YOUR MONEY

If a caller, claiming to work for O&R, demands that you pay your bill today by pre-paid debit card and threatens to disconnect your power immediately if you do not, here's what you should do:

HANG UP THE PHONE.

The caller is a crook trying to steal your money.

Here are two big reasons not to believe any crook who makes that shutoff threat:

- **NO PRE-PAID DEBIT CARDS** - O&R does not accept bill payment for electric and gas utility bills by GREEN DOT or any other PRE-PAID DEBIT CARDS. Never has.
- **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.

This is not a prank, joke, nuisance phone call or kids acting out. This is an organized, serious professional criminal enterprise that **STEALS TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS EACH YEAR** by successfully pulling this con on every-day people who can't afford to lose this money. And, this time of year, when COVID resurgence concerns, summer vacation plans and back-to-school worries are distracting many of us, reports of these theft attempts grow as the crooks try to take advantage of disrupted household routines.

So, if someone calls you, says they are an O&R employee and threatens to shut off your electric or gas service that day if not immediately paid through a pre-paid debit card, here's what to do:

- **Hang Up** – Disengage so you're not further subjected to the fraudulent high-pressure "sales pitch."
- **Ignore Texts** – After you hang up on them, the more aggressive predatory callers will try to repeat their shutoff threat by texting you. Ignore the threat.
- **Don't Hit "Redial"** – The caller ID screen on your phone for the phony bill collector's call may read "Orange and Rockland Utilities", but that's a hi-tech bogus copy of the utility company's number. That's not O&R. Do not redial, and don't call the number that the caller gives you to call them back. That will reconnect you to the crook.
- **Take Action** - 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 onto your account through ORU.com. to review your latest account information. You also can call O&R's automated phone system at 1-877-434-4100. Have your Orange and Rockland account number ready and follow the automated phone prompts to check your balance.

*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.