



NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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1.800.922.1594 (toll free in SC)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scam Alert: President Obama Utility Bill Payment Scam

Columbia, SC... Consumers in the Leesville area have been the first reported residents to fall victim to a new utility bill payment scam. Scammers are using fliers, text messages or phone calls to contact consumers in an attempt to convince them that President Obama authorized the government to pay their utility bills. Consumers are asked to provide their social security numbers or other personal identifying information in exchange for a bank routing number. The consumer is instructed to supply the bank number to the utility company for payment of their outstanding charges. In the end, the consumer's bill is not paid, but their information has been compromised.

This pretexting scam has been noted in other states as well, so consumers should be vigilant. ***Remember the following when dealing with your utilities:***

- Never give out personal information, such as financial account numbers or social security numbers, over the phone or internet to someone you do not know.
- A utility company will not attempt to enter your home without first making an appointment.
- Ask to see the employee's identification before allowing them into your home.
- If you are still wary of the person, feel free to call the utility company directly to verify their identity.

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SCDCA aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1.800.922.1594.

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