

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 14, 2021

Contact: Carol Flint

Consumer Affairs & Public Information, Division Director
802-522-2527

MEDIA RELEASE

Scam Callers Target Utility Customers

Montpelier, VT - The Department of Public Service has received complaints that Vermonters are receiving calls threatening to disconnect utility service. The Consumer Affairs and Public Information Division (CAPI) at the Department wants you to know that these calls are scam calls. You can report these threatening calls to your utility or the Attorney General's Office.

“Customers will not be disconnected for nonpayment because there is currently a moratorium on disconnection of regulated utilities for nonpayment,” says Commissioner June E. Tierney. “So, if you are being threatened with a disconnection and need help, call the Department’s consumer hotline at 800-622-4496.” There are rules that regulated utilities must follow before shutting off service to a customer for nonpayment. In addition to the normal rules, there are currently enhanced consumer protections in place for utility customers who may be experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19.

The temporary moratorium, effective through March 31, 2021, prohibits the shutoff of service for nonpayment of regulated natural gas, electric and traditional landline telephone service, [per order](#) of the Public Utility Commission. Additionally, water service cannot be involuntarily disconnected per [Sec. 9 of Act 92 \(2020\)](#). The moratorium on water disconnection will remain in effect for the duration of the state of emergency as [declared by the Governor](#), currently January 15, 2021.

CAPI can be reached by calling 800-622-4496 (leave a message with your phone number and staff will return your call promptly), emailing psd.consumer@vermont.gov or by filling out the [online complaint form](#).

###

Vermont Department of Public Service
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

###