Gov. Beshear Warns Kentuckians of Utility Scam during COVID-19 Pandemic

Utilities cannot be disconnected for non-payment during state of emergency


“Do not send payment to scammers threatening to cut off your electricity or other utilities.” This warning from Gov. Beshear comes after members of Kentucky electric co-ops reported receiving calls from someone claiming to work for the local utility and threatening to disconnect their service without immediate payment.

“The Kentucky Public Service Commission issued an order that halts disconnections for non-payment and fees for late payments. Anyone threatening to cut off your electricity during the COVID-19 emergency is likely a scammer,” said Gov. Beshear.

Friday, the Governor also issued an Executive Order that extends the protections against disconnection for non-payment and assessment of late fees for entities providing utility services not regulated by the Public Service Commission (PSC). This order applies to water, gas, electric and wastewater service. The Governor noted that the vast majority of cities and non-PSC-regulated entities have been voluntarily not disconnecting, and not assessing late payment fees, since the middle of March.
“No matter who you are or where you are in the commonwealth – you are protected from being disconnected for nonpayment,” Gov. Beshear added.

The temporary pause on disconnections will remain in place until further notice. However, these temporary measures do not mean customers are not obligated to pay their bills.

To help lower your chances of falling victim to a scam, use the following tips.

1. Know your utility services cannot be disconnected at this time for nonpayment
2. If you receive a call from someone pretending to be your utility representative:
   - Hang up! Do not give them personal or financial information
   - Call the publicly listed number for the utility company to verify your account status
3. If you are making a payment to your utility company during this time:
   - Double check that you are on the correct website, and not a fake replica, before submitting credit card or banking information

Kentuckians who suspect they have been contacted by a scammer should call the Consumer Protection Hotline at: 1-888-432-9257

Questions about your utility rates and service should be direct to the Public Service Commission, 
https://psc.ky.gov/Home/Contact

###