

Big Country Electric Cooperative Urges Consumers to Beware of Scam Targeting Utility Customers

Big Country Electric Cooperative (BCEC) received notice from a member who was recently contacted by someone who fraudulently identified themselves as an employee of Big Country Electric Cooperative, claiming that the member's account was past due and would be disconnected if not paid immediately.

This is the work of a scam that has occurred in many locations nationwide. We urge you to be vigilant and protective of your personal information: Do not give out personal information and be sure that you use a secure Internet connection and close out apps and websites completely once you have completed business transactions.

Please know that anytime BCEC contacts members:

- Our office phone numbers are local and will display on your Caller ID when BCEC contacts you. Some of our employees may call from cell phones when working in the field away from the office, but this will be limited to when they may be doing work near you and will not be related to billing or financial transactions for your BCEC account.
- Employees of Big Country Electric Cooperative will identify themselves by name as employees of Big Country Electric Cooperative, not as "your electric company". Example: "This is _____ with Big Country Electric...".
- BCEC adheres to the most stringent data security practices to protect our members' information. We will NOT ask you for personal information such as bank account, social security numbers, PIN numbers, birthdates, or any other sensitive information. We will only ask for limited identifying information for verification purposes on a call that is initiated by the member. Our billing employees can only see very limited personal information.
- We will NOT ask you to wire money, to use or send a prepaid money card.
- Most calls to members are made during business hours. Some automated payment reminder calls may occur after hours, but will show BCEC's local number.
- Our payment reminder calls do not demand immediate payment, but state that we have an important message about the account asking you to contact the cooperative by a specific time and date.
- We do not schedule disconnects for delinquent accounts after our regular business hours.

If any contact claiming to be BCEC seems suspicious or inappropriate, or if you would like to verify the validity of any communications from BCEC, please contact our offices at (325) 776-2244.

If you have been the victim of such a scam, please contact your local law enforcement and BCEC. Big Country Electric Cooperative will alert law enforcement to any instances of misrepresentation and fraud.