

Press Release: March 8, 2018

Scam Targets Customers Throughout TNMP Areas, Threatens Power Disconnection

LEWISVILLE, Texas –Texas-New Mexico Power would like to make customers aware of a telephone-based scam under way that threatens to disconnect customers' power if those customers don't make payments.

These callers are scammers who **don't** represent TNMP. Our company isn't a retail electric provider billing company, doesn't collect payments for service and doesn't make calls to customers regarding billing.

Customers who receive calls "from TNMP" demanding payment should hang up. They can call their billing companies – using the phone numbers on their bills – if they wish to check on their billing status.

"These scams aren't unusual in the utility business," TNMP President Neal Walker said. "But this scam that's under way is different in that it targets customers in every area we serve in Texas and leverages technology to try to fool people into believing TNMP really is involved."

The scam calls generally include this scenario:

- A customer's caller ID shows our 888 phone number and reads "TX NM POWER" or similar.
 - "Spoofing" software makes fake caller ID names and numbers pretty easy for scammers to use.
- Customers are told they have a very short period of time – sometimes just 45 minutes – to make a payment before they are disconnected.
- Scam callers instruct customers to visit a discount store to purchase a gift card.
- Customers are instructed to then call a different 888 number to use the gift card to make a payment.
 - The 888 number customers are told to call to pay is **not** TNMP's, even though an automated system picks up and identifies itself as "Texas-New Mexico Power."

Customers have reported this scam for about a week and come from every region we serve in Texas. TNMP is aware of reports that customers served by other Texas electric utilities have been targeted recently in a similar manner.

"These scams are always dangerous for customers, but they're usually very local and go away after a couple days," Walker said. "But this particular scam is unlike what we usually see."

"We really want to emphasize with customers the importance of knowing not to make these payments and for them to call their billing companies instead."

TNMP is a transmission and distribution service provider that delivers power to about 245,000 homes and businesses on behalf of retail electric providers in Texas. More information is available at tnmp.com/about.