

Here is how this latest payment scam works:

An individual pretending to be a PSE&G employee calls a customer and tells them that without immediate payment via a pre-paid card, their service will be shut off. Customers are given a telephone number to call back after they have purchased the card. When they call that number, they hear interactive voice response prompts that imitate those they would hear when calling the real PSE&G customer service line. When a fake representative answers the line, they ask for the number on the back of the pre-paid card. After the scammers have that number, they can take the money from the card – usually within a matter of minutes.

The only way to protect against these scams is for customers to be cautious when contacted by someone threatening service termination if they do not receive immediate payment via a pre-paid credit card. Before terminating service, PSE&G alerts customers in a number of ways: messages on their bill, letters and phone calls. The utility offers a number of payment options, and would never require a customer to use one specific type of payment.

“If you receive a call from anyone demanding immediate payment, do not give them any personal or account information,” said Dunlap. “Hang up the phone, and call the number listed on PSE&G’s website and bills: 1-800-436-PSEG (7734).”