

## **QAs – Scam Campaign**

Ministry of Energy

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

#### **Q1: Why are you doing this campaign now?**

A: The OEB has seen a 77 per cent increase in the number of reported scam calls, including through illegitimate phone calls, texts, emails, fake websites, social media (Facebook), YouTube videos, in-person home visits and ads.

We want to get Ontarians the information they need to make informed and careful decisions.

#### **Q2: Where can I go to report a scam or get more information?**

A: To report a possible scam contact the [Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre](#) toll-free at 1-888-495-8501

If you are concerned about any suspicious communications on social media, by email, by phone, text or door-to-door contact OEB at 1-877-632-2727 or [oeb.ca/scams](http://oeb.ca/scams)

#### **Q3: Where can I go to get help paying my energy bill?**

A: The Ministry and utilities offer a number of energy support programs such as the Ontario Electricity Support Program [ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/](http://ontarioelectricitysupport.ca/) and Low-income Energy Assistance Program. Learn how to apply: [oeb.ca/BillHelp](http://oeb.ca/BillHelp)

#### **Q4: How can I verify that a call about my energy service is legitimate?**

A: If you are unsure, do not provide any information, hang up and call your utility directly using the number on your utility bill. Also, know that a utility, the OEB, government and representatives from the Save On Energy program will not “cold call”. They will only respond if you reach out first.

#### **Q5: What if my power or natural gas service gets disconnected if I don't pay immediately?**

Only your utility can disconnect your service. Electricity and natural gas companies will never disconnect your service without first mailing bill payment reminders and a disconnection notice. And there is an annual disconnection ban in the province between November 15 and April 30. Customers of unit sub-meter providers are not protected by this ban.

**Q6. What things should I look out for?**

- 1) A call from someone posing to be from your utility that you did not reach out to first.
- 2) Someone demanding payment and threatening to immediately disconnect you. Your utility will not disconnect you before first sending bill payment reminders and a disconnection notice.
- 3) A request to pay your bill using gift cards, cash, or cryptocurrency. Utilities don't accept these forms of payment.
- 4) Someone contacting you offering to help you enroll in a bill payment assistance program and asking to book an appointment for a home assessment.