



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**September 13, 2016**

### **Local utilities warn customers of telephone scam**

(Tri-Cities, WA) A prominent way to scam people continues to be by telephone calls. Local utilities – Benton PUD, Franklin PUD and Richland Energy Services – urge customers to be aware of unusual and unlawful requests by phone.

Both local residents and businesses have received calls in which they were told the caller is collecting on a past due account and demanding they pay immediately or they will be disconnected that day. The caller requests the payment be made by money order, credit card or cash card. Caller ID can be spoofed and callers often have gained personal information that makes their demands sound very convincing. Callers are persistent, demanding and sound believable by quoting fictitious past due amounts and utility policies.

Utilities encourage customers to not give any personal or credit card information by telephone. If customers are unsure if a call is actually from their utility, they should hang up and call their utility.

(end)

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