

Southwestern Electric Power Co. has joined Utilities United Against Scams (UUAS) to support International Fraud Awareness this month.

Utility Scam Awareness is an advocacy and awareness campaign focused on educating customers and exposing the tactics used by scammers. This year's theme is "End the Call. End the Scam."

falling victim to fraud and putting their financial safety at risk."

Scammers typically claim to be a SWEPCO employee and approach customers at home, by phone or by email. Imposters often use the following techniques:

- Threaten to shut off power unless an immediate payment is made;
- Tell customers they need a new electric meter but must make a payment before the new meter is installed;
- Offer a discount on their SWEPCO bill if they sign up for auto-pay; or
- Demand that a deposit be paid immediately, insist a payment be made with a pre-paid credit card or ask to meet at another location to make a payment.

"We encourage our customers who experience any potential scam to check their account status online at SWEPCO.com/Account or through SWEPCO's mobile app," said Pratt. "For payment security, customers should only make payments online at SWEPCO.com, through the mobile app, through mail, by phone or at an authorized payment location."

SWEPCO will never ask for payments using a pre-paid debit card, gift card, cryptocurrencies, or third-party digital payment mobile applications. SWEPCO will provide multiple notices and assist customers with payment plan options before service interruptions.

Pratt added that customers who receive an unexpected knock on the door from someone claiming to be with SWEPCO or AEP should be cautious.

"SWEPCO employees will show their company ID, and customers can verify the employee's status by calling us at 1-888-216-3523," he said.

Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud or feel threatened during contact with a scammer should contact SWEPCO at 1-888-216-3523 or local law enforcement authorities.