



For Release: July 1, 2016

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# *MEDIA ADVISORY*

## **Minnesota Power reminds customers to be aware of scammers**

DULUTH, Minnesota—Telephone scams targeting electric utilities typically heat up in the summer and Minnesota Power encourages its customers to be alert and protect themselves.

These con artists often demand immediate payment of a past due electric bill saying that the power will be disconnected within the hour if no payment is made. Various directions are given for payment and may include prepaid money cards from Walgreen's or CVS, electronic funds transfer, routing and check numbers from a bank account, or credit or debit card numbers.

Customers who think they are dealing with a suspicious call are advised to hang up immediately and call Minnesota Power directly at 1-800-228-4966 to verify their account status and report this illegal activity.

Minnesota Power reminds customers of the procedures it follows for accounts with overdue bills:

- If a customer is behind on a bill, Minnesota Power sends a written notice before service is disconnected. Customers who have not received a disconnect notice in the mail should not engage with anyone on the phone offering to take payment. Instead, customers should hang up and contact Minnesota Power at 1-800-228-4966 to verify their account status and report the attempted scam.
- The company does place courtesy calls for various business reasons and leaves its 1-800-228-4966 number for a return call. These are usually recorded calls and never demand immediate payment of an overdue bill.
- While you may pay your Minnesota Power bill by phone or credit card, it is only through the company's third-party vendor, Western Union Speedpay, that these payments are accepted.

Customers should never give their personal information to strangers. To further protect themselves, customers should use only authorized methods to pay their Minnesota Power bill.

If customers believe they're a victim of a scam, they should notify the proper authorities, such as local police or state attorney general's office. Customers who believe their Minnesota Power account has been affected should call 1-800-228-4966 to speak with a Minnesota Power customer information representative.

Minnesota Power, an ALLETE company, provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 144,000 customers, 16 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at [www.mnpower.com](http://www.mnpower.com).

*The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.*

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