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SFPD Alert Public to Utility Payment Scam

5□ 10, 2013 | 10:27 □

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The San Francisco Police Department is alerting the public to a recent series of scams in which suspects pose as representatives of PG&E or the San Francisco Water Department and demand payment for overdue bills.

The suspects, who contact potential victims only by phone, claim that their bills are overdue and service will be terminated within the hour unless payment is received.

The suspects stipulate only one method of payment for the sum demanded: They must obtain a Money-Pak from a store and phone back at a number that the suspect has supplied. Once the victim calls back, a suspect orders the victim to read the Money-Pak account number, thus giving the suspect access to the funds, and then gives the victim a "confirmation number" and the call is terminated.

Neither utility company requests payment in this manner and has confirmed that the calls are fraudulent.

The public is cautioned to be wary of such calls and not to comply with demand for payment. The police department advises potential victims to file a police report if they receive such a call. Any utility customer having a question about utility service or a bill should always contact the company directly.

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