



Finance Department • 555 Santa Clara Street • Vallejo • CA • 94590 • 707.648.4592

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 5, 2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Rekha Nayar, Finance Director, Rekha.Nayar@cityofvallejo.net, (707) 648-4592

“VALLEJO WATER COMPANY” PHONE SCAM ADVISORY

VALLEJO, CA – On February 5, 2020 the City of Vallejo received reports of a potential scam involving their water billing service. Scammers have been posing as “Vallejo Water Company” employees, demanding immediate payment from customers, or their water service would be disconnected or shut off. ***These calls are fraudulent and not from the City of Vallejo.*** City of Vallejo customers with delinquent accounts will always receive advance disconnection notifications from the City, typically by mail. The City of Vallejo *never* sends a single notification one hour or less before disconnect.

Customers with questions about their water bill should call the City of Vallejo’s Water Billing team at (707) 648-4345, which is also listed on monthly bills and the City’s [website](#) - not the phone number the scammer provides.

If you receive a suspicious call from someone claiming to be from the “Vallejo Water Company,” please contact the [Vallejo Police Department](#) at (707) 648-4321. Never provide your bank account, credit card, or personal information to anyone on the phone when you receive these types of calls.

Below is helpful information the public should be aware of in these types of situations:

Signs of Potential Scam Activity:

- *Threat to disconnect:* Scammers may aggressively tell a customer his or her utility bill is past due and service will be disconnected if a payment is not made – usually within less than an hour.
- *Request for immediate payment:* Scammers may instruct a customer to purchase a prepaid card – widely available at retail stores – and then call them back to allegedly make a payment to his or her utility company.
- *Request for prepaid card:* When the customer calls back, the scammer asks the customer for the prepaid card’s number, which grants the scammer instant access to the card’s funds, and the victim’s money is gone.

How Customers Can Protect Themselves:

- Customers should never purchase a prepaid card to avoid service disconnection or shutoff. Legitimate utility companies do not specify how customers should make a bill payment, and always offer a variety of ways to pay a bill, including accepting payments online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail, or in person.

- If someone threatens immediate disconnection or shutoff of service, customers should hang up the phone, delete the email, or shut the door. If customers ever feel that they are in immediate physical danger, they should call 911.

< END >