



News Release

Mansfield Department of Police
30 North Diamond Street, Mansfield Ohio 44902
(419) 755-9724



Kenneth Coontz, Chief of Police

For Immediate Release

Date: August 29th, 2016

No. # 53

Subject: Fraudulent “Electric Bill” Call Alert

The Mansfield Division of Police would like to alert area residents of a phone fraud/scam occurring in our community. We have received several complaints from area residents who advised they are receiving calls from the “Electric Company” advising them that they owe back electric bills and that the “electric would be cut-off within the hour if the bill was not paid”. The caller will even leave the victim a number to call back with phone prompts directing them to “bill payment” which adds to the realistic validity of the call. Some of these recent fraudulent calls are from a telephone number prefix of “844” which is not a known area code but a toll prefix like the “800” numbers. Many of these calls are being made from out of the country by unknown persons, making prosecution, impossible for local agencies. The tip-off is the high pressure for an immediate payment by way of a cash card (Green Dot, etc...). Anyone asking for money to be put on these types of cards is most likely scammers.

If you receive one of these calls, please use caution. No legitimate company is going to use ‘high pressure’ tactics to collect a debt an hour before taking action. Look up the number of your utility company and call them directly to confirm validity of the call you received. Also, if you are suspicious of the validity of the calls you are receiving, do an Internet search on the number as many will be identified as being associated with fraudulent scams.

We are seeing an increase in fraudulent calls/scams from various sources including those claiming to be affiliated with the IRS, debt collectors, and even law enforcement. Please be diligent and refrain from following through on their ‘high pressure’ instructions and avoid giving out personal information over the phone to unknown persons or those persons you cannot confirm, “are who they say they are”.

Please continue to report these types of suspected fraudulent activities and scams to the Ohio Attorney General’s Office by calling 1-800-282-0515 or by visiting their website at www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov and clicking on the “Report Tips and Scams” icon.