

## Subject: Fake WE Energies Calls Targeting Small Businesses

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

SERVING THE STATE OF WISCONSIN SINCE 1839

### DATCP CONSUMER ALERT: Fake We Energies Calls Targeting Small Businesses

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MADISON - This week, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has seen a spike in contacts from Wisconsin businesses who received threatening phone calls about their utility accounts from imposters claiming to represent We Energies. Small businesses and consumers alike should be on the lookout for these phony calls.

Scammers are calling businesses and threatening them with disconnection of services unless an immediate payment is made. While the most recent reports to DATCP have been about contacts from fake We Energies representatives, this is a very common scam and con artists will claim to work for whatever utility company services the area they are targeting.

Regardless of your utility provider, if you receive a similar threatening call about your home or business utility account, hang up and do not engage the caller. Contact your utility provider directly using information from your billing statement to inquire about the status of your account and to report the call.

#### **Avoid being tricked in a utility scam by remembering these simple guidelines:**

- Utility companies will contact you by mail if your account is overdue. They may also call you if your services are at risk of being terminated, but will NEVER demand immediate payment over the phone.
- If a caller demands a utility payment by prepaid debit card or wire transfer, it is a scam.
- Scammers can manipulate your caller ID display to show the local utility company's name or number when they call.

For additional information or to file a complaint, visit the Consumer Protection Bureau at <http://datcp.wisconsin.gov>, send an e-mail to [datcph hotline@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcph hotline@wisconsin.gov), or call the Consumer Protection Hotline toll-free at [1-800-422-7128](tel:1-800-422-7128).