



## Scammers posing as Entergy say they'll turn off power without payment

Bill Capo / Eyewitness News

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NEW ORLEANS -- The last thing anyone wants in mid-summer is to lose electricity, and that's what Elizabeth thought would happen when her phone rang.

'I answered the phone, Elizabeth said, 'and she said 'This is Lisa from the Entergy disconnection department, and we're gonna be disconnecting your lights within 45 minutes if we don't receive payment.' And I'm like, 'Hold on, my bill's not even due yet.'"

First the caller wanted \$1100, then dropped it to \$400 when Elizabeth protested. Frightened, Elizabeth and her husband raced to follow the caller's directions to purchase a special card to transfer funds.

But then she got suspicious.

'This seems strange that you only got 45 minutes to pay a bill. and when we called Entergy, she said, 'Oh no ma'am, that's not true, that's a scam.'"

This is a scam, but it's a very effective one. People get rattled when they're told their electricity is about to be cut off. In fact, a West Bank restaurant paid the scammers \$2000.

Now Entergy officials say customer service representatives do not place calls to people who are about to be disconnected. They use an automated system, and they never demand instant payment.

'You'll never hear from a live person saying you're about to be disconnected,' said **Philip Allison of Entergy**, 'and we never call the day of.'

'I was fortunate enough to think about calling Entergy before I went and did this, and I was worried about the elderly people, someone who might fall for this,' said Elizabeth.

'And I've heard about some calls in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas where we also have customers as well, so it is pretty widespread, and we want customers to be aware of it,' said Allison.

The Better Business Bureau is also getting calls about this scam.

Entergy notes that those who are actually facing having their power cut off receive disconnect letters from the utility. They urge those who receive suspicious calls to contact Entergy directly at 1-800-ENTERGY, or call law enforcement.