

# Avoiding Utility Payment Scams

Scam artists will always find ways to prey on consumers and try to defraud them of their hard-earned money. Be aware of scam signals, and don't get caught up in a utility payment scam!

## How can you spot a utility payment scam?



A scam artist will typically initiate a call from an unknown telephone number.



During the phone conversation, the scam artist will try to persuade you that an unpaid balance exists on your electric bill.



The scam artist will then try and pressure you into paying through a wire transfer or prepaid debit card, and NOT through the official payment methods offered by the Cooperative.



The caller will often threaten to disconnect your electric service if payment is not made promptly.



If your electric bill is delinquent or past due, the Cooperative will first MAIL a “Delinquent Notice” before making any further attempt to contact members to discuss available payment options.

## What should you do if you think you have encountered a utility payment scam?

1. Report the incident to Carroll Electric at [1.800.432.9720](tel:1.800.432.9720).
2. Verify your electric balance with a Customer Service Representative, through the Cooperative's automated phone system, online through the *myAccount* portal, or through the Carroll Electric mobile app.
3. File a complaint with the appropriate Attorney General's office.



For other helpful resources on SCAMS, please visit our corporate webpage at [carrollecc.com/scam-alert](http://carrollecc.com/scam-alert).

# HOW TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

Outages may be reported 24 hours a day, by one of the following methods:

- Call 800-432-9720
- visit [carrollecc.com](http://carrollecc.com)
- Use the Carroll Electric mobile app

## Update your contact information

Correct contact information helps us serve you better during an outage. Call our office at 800-432-9720 during regular business hours to update contact information.

## Confirm the outage

Before reporting an outage, please confirm it by checking lights and appliances in all rooms. If you still have power in some areas, most likely a fuse or a circuit breaker in your house has blown. If all lights and appliances are off, please report the outage immediately.

Once you report the outage, please do not report the outage again unless an emergency arises.

## During the outage

- During a prolonged outage, turn off major appliances, TVs, computers and other sensitive electronics to avoid damage in case of a power surge. This will also prevent overloading circuits during power restoration.
- Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. If the doors stay closed during the length of the outage, a full freezer will hold its temperature for 48 hours, and a refrigerator will keep food safe for four hours, according to [usda.gov](http://usda.gov).
- If using a generator, make sure to follow the manufacturers guidelines to operate it safely.

## After the outage

- Give the electrical system a chance to stabilize by gradually reconnecting any appliances you previously disconnected. When the power first comes back on, turn on only the most essential appliances, and wait a few minutes before reconnecting others.
- Check food for signs of spoilage, such as unusual odor, color or texture. Don't take chances with food you are not sure about. When in doubt, throw it out!

# STAYING SAFE

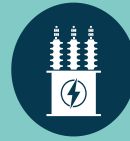
## DURING AN OUTAGE

We work hard to provide the most reliable service possible. Rest assured, if the power is out, we are on it!

The length of time it takes to restore your power depends on several factors, including the:



Extent of the storm's destruction



Severity of utility equipment damage



Number and extent of outages



Accessibility to damaged equipment

## STAY SAFE UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED

- Stay far away and keep others away from downed power lines, which could be live and deadly.
- If you come across a downed line, immediately call Carroll Electric to report it.
- Never enter a flooded room; the water could be energized.
- If you are standing in water, do not turn on/off power or flip switch.



## Prepare for a storm by gathering these items:

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|--|---|
|  Bottles of water       |  Extra batteries |
|  Non-perishable food    |  Pet supplies    |
|  Portable phone charger |  Blankets        |
|  Prescriptions          |  Warm clothing   |
|  Battery-operated radio |  First-aid kit   |
|  Flashlights            |  Hand sanitizer  |

THANK YOU for your patience during outages. When the lights go off, we are working safely and efficiently to restore power. The safety of our employees, as well as those we serve, is our TOP priority.