



JUNE 2024

CO-OP CURRENT



Know the Signs of a Scam



Consumers with water, gas, or electricity connections have long been targets for utility scams, especially as reliance on technology for work, school, and commerce has increased. Scammers have adapted to this environment, with impostor scams being the most reported fraud to the Federal Trade Commission. While traditional tactics like posing as utility workers still exist, scams now often come through electronic means such as email, phone calls, or texts.

One common scam involves threatening to disconnect service unless an overdue bill is paid immediately. Regardless of the medium used, the goal is to induce fear and prompt, quick payment without clear thinking. If contacted by phone, simply hang up and verify with the utility provider. Emails or texts should be deleted without action. Utility companies, like SCI REMC, typically don't demand immediate payment after just one notice. SCI REMC accounts that have the potential for disconnected service will receive a printed notice on their bill.

Another scam entails offering a fake refund for an alleged overcharge on a bill. Victims are prompted to provide personal or banking information, which can lead to identity theft or financial loss. If encountered over the phone, hang up and block the number. Emails or texts requesting personal information should be deleted and blocked. Legitimate refunds from SCI REMC are for disconnected services on inactive accounts if there's a credit after the account's final bill. If a member overpays their bill, the credit will be applied to future bills.

To defend against scams, caution is advised when receiving calls or texts from unknown numbers. Be skeptical of unknown individuals claiming to be utility workers seeking personal information. Never allow utility workers entry into your home unless the visit is scheduled or you have reported issues. SCI REMC employees wear identifiable uniforms and carry badges when working on members' properties. Reporting potential scams to the utility provider helps protect the community by spreading awareness and preventing others from falling victim.

Furthermore, consumers can verify account status and bill inquiries by using SCI REMC's resources, such as the SCI Connect app or direct phone calls to the provided numbers: 765.342.3344 or toll-free at 800.264.7362. These numbers are also available on monthly bills and the SCI REMC website (sciremc.com). By staying informed and vigilant, individuals can reduce the risk of falling prey to utility scams. Collaborative efforts between utility providers and consumers are essential in combating these fraudulent activities and safeguarding the community's financial and personal information.



RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS

Don't be fooled by utility scams!

THREATS OR PRESSURE

Scammers will pressure you, creating a sense of urgency. Claims that your service will be disconnected without immediate payment are common with utility scams.





SKETCHY PAYMENT METHODS

Scammers may ask for unusual payment methods like gift cards or cryptocurrency. In these cases, it's likely a scam.

DODGY COMMUNICATION

Whether an email, text message, or letter, utility scams typically include poor grammar, spelling errors, or unusual email addresses. These are common warning signs of a scam.



HOW TO HANDLE SCAMMERS

Phone Call	Email/Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't provide personal information. Hang up and immediately contact SCI REMC with the information requested below. Provide information to SCI REMC (such as the phone number or type of payment they are requesting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't click on any attachments or links. Report and block the sender. Do not reply. Contact SCI REMC immediately with the information provided below. Provide information to SCI REMC (such as phone number, email address, or type of payment method they are requesting).

If you think you have encountered a scammer impersonating SCI REMC, please call us at 765.342.3344 or toll-free at 800.264.7362.

DIRECTOR PETITIONS

ARE NOW AVAILABLE

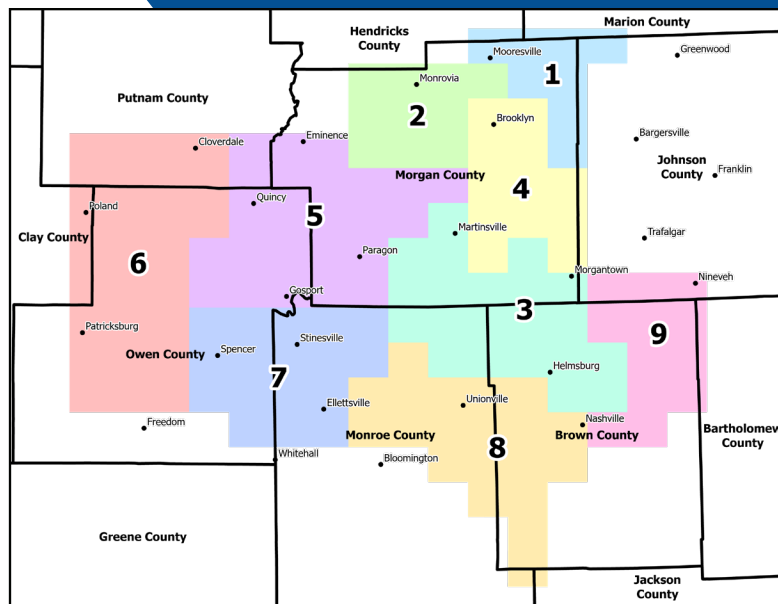
Districts up for election:

- District 3
- District 4
- District 8

Petitions will be due July 30, 2024

Visit sciremc.com or contact Stacey at 800.264.7362, ext. 111 for more information.

To learn about the responsibilities of being a director, visit sciremc.com/annualmeeting.



We Want Your Feedback!

Fill out a short survey for a chance to win a **\$25 bill credit!**

Those who provide their information will be entered into a drawing where one member will be randomly selected to receive a \$25 bill credit.

sciremc.com/monthlysurvey



Members must participate in the monthly survey by the deadline to be eligible for the bill credit drawing. The deadlines for each month will be on the webpage with the survey. Members must submit their contact information and account number to enter. The winner will be announced on Facebook and notified via the provided email upon survey submission.



INTERNET THAT'S RELIABLE

- ✓ Work from home
- ✓ Stream your favorite movies and shows
- ✓ Connect your smart devices
- ✓ Use multiple devices at once

www.sciremc.com/fiber