

## News Release

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### BEWARE OF NATIONAL BILL PAYMENT SCAM

**Rockford, Minn. (July 12, 2012)** — Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) would like to make its members and the surrounding area aware of a new, nationwide bill scam that's taking advantage of the hot weather and hard economic times.

Solicitors are calling utility customers claiming that the Obama administration will pay utility bills in exchange for personal information. This scam has hit Minnesota, and some of WH's customers have called the cooperative to inquire about the phony program.

According to the Better Business Bureau, utility customers are being asked to provide their social security numbers and bank routing numbers in order to apply for a federal government program that pays utility bills on a one-time basis. In turn for this information, customers are given a fake Federal Reserve Bank routing number to use for future online bill payments. Customers who use this number are led to believe that their utility bills have been paid.

If you receive a phone call about this program, hang up immediately. WH recommends that you always use caution when giving out personal information over the phone. If you're ever in question of the validity of a phone conversation where you are asked to give out personal information, hang up, and call the business in question back through the company's listed phone number found on a trusted website or through directory assistance.

WH is a member-owned non-profit electric utility that provides electric power to Wright County and the western part of Hennepin County. The cooperative has been a corporate citizen in this area since 1937 and currently serves more than 46,000

electric accounts. The utility started its security division in 1989 that provides local home security solutions as well as monitors alarm systems for more than 50,000 customers in 32 states and three Canadian provinces.

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