

PUCN Connection

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM the PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF NEVADA

Produced by the PUCN's Outreach & Public Information Offices

July 2020 Edition

Attorney General Ford Warns of Utility Imposter Scams

Nevada Attorney General Aaron D. Ford is advising Nevadans to watch out for utility imposter phone scams as local businesses reopen. During this transition, scammers may attempt to promote misleading and fraudulent information to consumers and small local business owners.

"As the economy recovers, scammers are finding new ways to perpetuate fraud," said AG Ford. "While businesses are adjusting to new ways to conduct business, I'm urging Nevadans to be vigilant about educating themselves on scams and confirming the accuracy of information."

Online and over-the-phone imposter scams come in many forms. The basic utility imposter scam involves a scammer posing as a member of a utility company demanding money from unsuspecting customers. The scammer often calls from a number that has been "spoofed" to look like it belongs to the actual company; however, it is just an attempt to add legitimacy to the scam. The scammer usually explains that the consumer is behind on his or her utility bill and demands immediate payment to avoid shutoff. This is just a scare tactic.

Typically, utility companies send at least two past due notices in writing before disconnecting or terminating service, and consumers should be suspicious if they receive a threatening phone call or in-person visit with no prior written notice. If you receive a phone call or in-person visit without having received written notice, hang up the phone and call your utility company directly using the number on your bill to discuss the status of your account.

Ask for details about your account to verify whether the caller is legitimate. If the caller is unable or unwilling to provide details such as dates and amounts of prior invoices and payments, hang up and call the utility company directly.

The Office of the Nevada Attorney General suggests the following additional tips to avoid utility imposter scams:

- If you are being pressured to make an immediate payment,

remain calm and ask questions to confirm your account status before making a payment.

- Don't agree to make payments by wire transfer or with a prepaid card over the telephone. A legitimate utility representative will explain to a customer how a payment can be made using the utility's established payment options, and will not demand payment over the phone.
- Don't feel pressured by an upcoming weekend or holiday. According to the [Nevada Public Utilities Commission website](https://www.puc.nv.gov), a utility company may not disconnect or terminate service the day before a weekend, on the weekend or on a state holiday, unless a safety issue requires disconnection.

These tips also apply if a utility company representative comes to your home to demand payment for a past due account. In this situation, ask to view an identification badge with the representative's full name, and then call the utility company directly to discuss the status of your account.

If you believe you have been a victim of a scam, file a complaint with the [Nevada Attorney General](https://www.nvattorneygeneral.gov) or the [FTC](https://www.ftc.gov).

PUBLIC COMMENT

On March 22, Governor Sisolak signed an emergency declaration suspending the requirement that public bodies in Nevada provide a physical location for the public to attend and participate in meetings. The public may comment at PUCN agenda meetings by phone or email. These procedures are in place until further notice.

PHONE: (775) 687-6014

Call in five minutes before the meeting starts to provide your name to PUCN personnel.

EMAIL: BPA@PUC.NV.GOV

Submit written comments prior to the meeting.

Links to agenda meeting supporting material and the live video stream of agenda meetings are available at [puc.nv.gov](https://www.puc.nv.gov).



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LIFELINE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Many consumers may be newly eligible due to the financial impact of COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic's unprecedented impact on the economy and Nevada consumers, the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN), Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) are partnering to increase awareness of the federal Lifeline program, which helps eligible low-income consumers access affordable broadband and phone services.

A consequence of the pandemic is many consumers eligible for Lifeline for the first time due to financial hardships such as unemployment may be unaware of the program or how to apply for benefits. The FCC recently granted temporary relief to newly unemployed consumers. Specifically, the FCC has eased documentation requirements for those seeking to qualify for Lifeline based on income. During the current crisis, it is critical that Nevadans have the connectivity they need to stay in touch with family, telecommute, search for jobs, participate in remote learning and telehealth, and maintain the social distancing necessary to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Lifeline is a Universal Service Fund program that provides qualifying low-income consumers with monthly discounts on Internet or phone service. Consumers can receive up to \$9.25 in federal Lifeline benefits and an additional \$3.50 from the Nevada Lifeline fund, for a combined benefit of \$12.75 for non-tribal consumers. Certain eligible Tribal consumers can receive up to \$34.25 in federal Lifeline discounts. Non-tribal consumers qualify for Lifeline if: (1) they participate in certain federal benefits programs (such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition

Assistance Program, Federal Public Housing or the Veterans Pension and Survivor's Benefit); or (2) their household income is at or below 135 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Until August 31, 2020, consumers may be eligible to use a submitted application for unemployment benefits to assist in demonstrating eligibility. The Lifeline discount is limited to one benefit per household.

More information on program eligibility and how to apply directly through the National Eligibility Verifier, including links to a list of Lifeline providers in Nevada, is available at lifelinesupport.org. Downloadable materials about the Lifeline program are available on the "Community Outreach" page, including "How to Apply" fact sheets in English and Spanish as well as for Tribal consumers.

For additional Lifeline application support, consumers also may contact their provider of telephone or internet service, including some wireless providers. If your wireless provider is a designated Eligible Telecommunications Carrier, it should offer the Lifeline discount. Check the PUCN's website to see if your provider is a designated [Eligible Telecommunications Carrier](#).

Lifeline is administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company and information on the National Eligibility Verifier, along with other resources, also is available at usac.org/lifeline under COVID-19 Response.

Mobile app compliments 211 helpline and Nevada211.com

Nevada 211, an accredited agency overseen by the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services and powered by Money Management International (MMI), is pleased to announce the release of a new app, available in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

"In light of the challenges created by coronavirus, it is especially timely that we provide another free, user-friendly tool for anyone seeking health or social service assistance within the state," said Lisa Martin, Nevada 211 Director at MMI. "It's now easier than ever to connect with organizations providing local assistance to meet critical needs, including housing, food, **utility assistance**, transportation, and childcare."

Use the Nevada 211 app to:

- Search local community resources based on zip code or cellular geolocation.
- Find program information, including eligibility and fees (if applicable).
- Connect to a Nevada 211 Call Specialist by phone or text.

Nevada 211 strives to empower all Nevadans to achieve

optimal self-sufficiency, health, and well-being. Since 2006, millions of people have found help by dialing 211, texting 898211, or visiting Nevada211.org. Through these channels, individuals and families connect with vetted health and human service resources.

About Nevada 211

Nevada 211, a program of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services and powered by Money Management International (MMI), is committed to helping Nevadans find the services they need. Whether by phone, app, or internet, we present accurate, well-organized and easy-to-find information from state and local health and human services programs. Dial 211, text 898211, download the app, or visit Nevada211.org.



Dockets Opened at the PUCN in June 2020

Visit puc.nv.gov/Dockets/Dockets/ to view documents filed in the dockets listed below.

Docket	Date Filed	Description
20-06001	6/1/2020	Notice by Windstream Holdings, Inc., Broadview Networks, Inc., McLeodUSA Telecommunications Services, L.L.C. d/b/a PAETEC Business Services, PaeTec Communications, LLC, Talk America, LLC, Windstream NuVox, LLC, Windstream Communications, LLC, DeltaCom, LLC d/b/a EarthLink Business I, and EarthLink Business, LLC of a transaction that will result in a transfer of control of telecommunication companies.
20-06002	6/8/2020	Registration of DISH Wireless L.L.C. as a commercial mobile radio service provider.
20-06003	6/1/2020	Application of Nevada Power Company d/b/a NV Energy for authority to adjust its annual revenue requirement for general rates charged to all classes of electric customers and for relief properly related thereto.
20-06004	6/1/2020	Petition of Sierra Pacific Power Company d/b/a NV Energy for approval to adjudicate and establish the cost recovery mechanism for the One Nevada Transmission Line reallocated revenue requirement pursuant to the Order issued in Docket No. 19-05002.
20-06005	6/2/2020	Notice by Prospector Pipeline Company, under the provisions of the Utility Environmental Protection Act, of an application to a federal agency for approval to construct the TS Pipeline Project consisting of a private 12 to 16-inch diameter underground natural gas pipeline facility totaling approximately 22 miles and associated facilities to be located in Eureka and Elko Counties, Nevada.
20-06006	6/2/2020	Notice by Embarq Corporation, CenturyLink Public Communications, Inc. d/b/a CenturyLink, and Inmate Calling Solutions, LLC d/b/a ICSolutions of a transaction that will result in a transfer of control of a telecommunication company.
20-06007	6/2/2020	Filing by Churchill County Board of Commissioners d/b/a CC Communications of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Intercarrier Compensation Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304.
20-06008	6/3/2020	Notice by Frontier Communications of the Southwest Inc. of Service Catalog updates to grandfather residential service offerings.
20-06009	6/3/2020	Application of Gold Country Water Company, Inc. for approval to withdraw \$14,519.18 in funds from its surcharge funds account to pay for replacement of the failed submersible motor, pump, and appurtenances at Well 2.
20-06010	6/3/2020	Filing by T-Mobile West LLC d/b/a T-Mobile to update information.
20-06011	6/3/2020	Filing by MetroPCS Nevada, LLC d/b/a Metro by T-Mobile to update information.
20-06012	6/4/2020	Filing by Sprint Spectrum L.P. d/b/a Sprint, Nextel or Sprint/Nextel to update information.
20-06013	6/4/2020	Filing by Assurance Wireless USA, L.P. to update information.
20-06014	6/5/2020	Application of Nevada Gold Energy LLC, under the provisions of the Utility Environmental Protection Act, for a permit to construct the TS Solar Project consisting of an approximately 200 MW alternating current photovoltaic solar electric generating facility, a 120 kV on-site substation, a 120 kV generation-tie line, an optional battery energy storage system, and associated facilities to be located in Eureka County, Nevada.
20-06015	6/3/2020	Filing by Desert Utilities, Inc. requesting assistance of the Regulatory Operations Staff in preparing an application for a general rate change.
20-06016	6/9/2020	Joint Petition of the Regulatory Operations Staff and Henderson Masonry, LLC ("Henderson Masonry") requesting the Commission accept a stipulation regarding violations of Nevada's One Call Law by Henderson Masonry.
20-06017	6/9/2020	Registration of DISH Wireless L.L.C. as a commercial mobile radio service provider.
20-06018	6/10/2020	Notice by Rio Virgin Telephone Company d/b/a Reliance Connects that current switched access service rates comply with Federal Communications Commission Docket No. FCC 11-161.
20-06019	6/11/2020	Application of Sierra Pacific Power Company d/b/a NV Energy, under the provisions of the Utility Environmental Protection Act, for a permit to construct the South Reno Second Source Gas Project consisting of a 16-inch diameter steel high pressure distribution gas pipeline totaling 16 miles and multiple pressure regulating stations to be located in Storey and Washoe Counties, Nevada.
20-06020	6/11/2020	Application of Gentry Place Mobile Home Park to withdraw \$12,890.78 from the tenant service charge account for reimbursement of expenses incurred to repair and maintain the electrical system.
20-06021	6/10/2020	Filing by Oregon-Idaho Utilities, Inc. d/b/a Humboldt Telephone Company of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Intercarrier Compensation Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304.
20-06022	6/11/2020	Filing by Q LINK WIRELESS LLC of updated Tariff No. 1 that includes revisions to wireless Lifeline plans and Tariff No. 2 to replace its Lifeline Advisory Tariff to reflect a change of company address.
06-06023	06/12/2020	Filing by Lincoln County Telephone System, Inc. of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Intercarrier Compensation ("CAF ICC") Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304, supplemental TRP data pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 51.909, and annual certifications regarding CAF ICC data reported to the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 57.917.

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June Dockets: *continued from page 3*

Docket	Date Filed	Description
06-06024	06/12/2020	Filing by Rural Telephone Company of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Inter-carrier Compensation ("CAF ICC") Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304, supplemental TRP data pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 51.909, and annual certifications regarding CAF ICC data reported to the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 57.917.
06-06025	06/12/2020	Filing by Moapa Valley Telephone Company of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Inter-carrier Compensation ("CAF ICC") Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304, supplemental TRP data pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 51.909, and annual certifications regarding CAF ICC data reported to the Federal Communications Commission pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 57.917.
06-06026	06/22/2020	Filing by Rio Virgin Telephone Company d/b/a Reliance Connects of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Inter-carrier Compensation Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304.
06-06027	06/18/2020	Filings by Eligible Telecommunications Carriers related to Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") Form 481 to comply with the FCC's annual reporting requirements pursuant to 47 CFR 54.314.
06-06028	06/18/2020	Filing by Frontier Communications of the Southwest Inc. and Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nevada d/b/a Frontier Communications of Nevada of annual data regarding Connect America Fund Inter-carrier Compensation Replacement funding eligibility pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.304 and annual certification that price cap carrier is not seeking duplicative Eligible Recovery pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 51.915.
06-06029	06/19/2020	Filing by Sierra Pacific Power Company d/b/a NV Energy of changes in rates within its Gas Tariff Schedule No. INGR pursuant to NAC 704.522 and NAC 704.526.
06-06030	06/22/2020	Filing by Boomerang Wireless, LLC d/b/a enTouch Wireless of Informational Tariff No. 1 that includes revisions to Wireless Lifeline Program.
06-06031	06/22/2020	Application of Sierra Pacific Power Company d/b/a NV Energy, filed under Advice Letter No. 619-E, to revise Electric Tariff No. 1 to implement Market Price Energy Schedule No. MPE to allow eligible customers to receive bundled electric service, reflecting market price of energy, using energy resources that will not subject the customer to the imposition of an impact fee.
06-06032	06/22/2020	Application of Sierra Pacific Power Company d/b/a NV Energy, filed under Advice Letter No. 631-E, to revise Electric Tariff No. 1 to implement Large Customer Market Price Energy Schedule No. LCMPE to allow eligible customers to receive bundled electric service, reflecting market price of energy, using energy resources that will not subject the customer to the imposition of an impact fee.
06-06033	06/19/2020	Application of Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nevada d/b/a Frontier Communications of Nevada, filed under Advice Letter No. NV-20-07, for the Elko Division to revise Tariff No. 1-B to grandfather Stay Connected Seasonal Offering.
06-06034	06/19/2020	Application of Citizens Telecommunications Company of Nevada d/b/a Frontier Communications of Nevada, filed under Advice Letter No. NV-20-08, for the Tonopah Division to revise Tariff No. 1-B to grandfather Stay Connected Seasonal Offering.
06-06035	06/25/2020	Notice by Highlands Wireless Inc. of a transaction that will result in a transfer of control of a telecommunication company.
06-06036	06/23/2020	Filing by Oregon-Idaho Utilities, Inc. d/b/a Humboldt Telephone Company of annual report of high-cost recipient pursuant to the requirements of 47 CFR 54.313.
06-06037	06/26/2020	Notice by 326FW 8me LLC, under the provisions of the Utility Environmental Protection Act, of an application to a federal agency for approval to construct the Arida-Mohave Transmission Project consisting of a 500 kV transmission line associated with the Arida Solar Project, to be located near Laughlin in Clark County, Nevada.
06-06038	06/29/2020	Notice by Twilio International, Inc. of its intent to request numbering resources for various rate centers from the North American Numbering Plan Administrator.
06-06039	06/29/2020	Application of Cathect Communications, Inc. for authority to operate as a competitive supplier of telecommunication service within the State of Nevada.
06-06040	06/29/2020	Application of the Nevada Department of Transportation for authority to alter the existing UPRR and 4th Street bridges, Bridge Nos. G-1233L and G-1233, over the Union Pacific Railroad tracks located at the I-580 crossing in Reno, Nevada.

Prior editions of PUCN Connection are available at puc.nv.gov/About/Media_Outreach/PUCN_Connection/.

For questions or comments about this newsletter, contact Consumer Outreach Director Dawn Rivard at drivard@puc.nv.gov or Communications Director Peter Kostas at pkostas@puc.nv.gov.