

Power company warns of scam

Tampa Electric Co. and the Tampa Police Department issued a warning Thursday about scammers who impersonate utility workers attempting to collect a payment. The scammers call businesses during a busy hour and appear to have a phone number belonging to the utility, according to a news release. They then tell the customer that they must buy a prepaid debit card from a nearby drug store if they don't want their power turned off. Tampa Electric spokeswoman Cherie Jacobs said several customers called regarding the scam, prompting the release. "Tampa Electric never demands payment in person or calls to ask for credit or debit card numbers," Janelle McGregor, spokeswoman for the Police Department, wrote in a warning on neighborhood social media NextDoor. To verify a Tampa Electric employee, call (863) 299-0800 in Polk County and (813) 223-0800 elsewhere.