

Ameren Illinois advising customers against scams in Edwardsville

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EDWARDSVILLE – Ameren Illinois employees are working to help Edwardsville residents identify utility scammers this week.

According to a release from Ameren Illinois, Ameren employees will be “hitting the streets” of Edwardsville Wednesday morning specifically to alert small and family-

owned businesses regarding utility schemes. As many as 20-30 Edwardsville businesses will be visited by Ameren Illinois employees Wednesday morning. It is part of a comprehensive public education campaign the company is implementing in communities across Central and Southern Illinois from Oct. 15-19, the release said.

A representative from Ameren Illinois said Edwardsville was chosen to be the municipality visited within the Riverbend area. He said a “handful of communities across the service area” were chosen, and the choice this year was Edwardsville.

The release stated the most common utility scams involve a scenario in which a person poses as an Ameren Illinois employee or representative, calls an Ameren Illinois customer and threatens to disconnect service if the customer does not immediately pay a fee. It stated the most common targets are small businesses because they may yield higher dollar amounts than individual customers.

As many as 4,000 customers have been targeted with such scams since Ameren Illinois began tracking scammers in 2014, according to the release. These scams have paid out as much as \$140,000. In 2018, as many as 700 customers have already been contacted by possible scammers.