

## ESCO door to door solicitor Information

I have recently received several complaints about door to door solicitors inquiring about gas and electric service. As a result you may have received a copy of my bulletin about scams and solicitors.

As a follow up to these complaints, I spoke to Rochester Gas and Electric customer service. It was explained to me that these people going door to door DO NOT work for RG&E. They do work for various “ESCO’s” (Energy Service Companies) who offer alternative services in competition with RG&E. I was told that some of these “ESCO’s” are very reputable while others are somewhat unscrupulous in their sales tactics. Apparently some salespersons would have you believe that they do work for RG&E in an effort to see your latest RG&E bill. They are able to get enough information from your bill to transfer your account over to their company without your permission. Please be very cautious of all solicitors who come to your door.

I am told by RG&E customer service that if you allowed an unscrupulous ESCO salesperson to view your recent RG&E bill it is possible that they can transfer your account to their company without your approval. To stop this from occurring, contact RG&E customer service ASAP at: 1.800.743.2110

RG&E customer service also told me that RG&E DOES NOT send any employees door to door other than meter readers. Anyone who openly represents themselves as an RG&E employee will have a photo ID from RG&E, otherwise they are trying to mislead you. Please continue to call 911 for those solicitors who openly try to mislead you or refuse to show you any ID. If you are approached by a reputable ESCO representative, please use your best judgment when considering their offer. (Some ESCO’s are perfectly legitimate and MAY be able to save you money)

All door to door solicitors must carry a permit issued by City Hall. When in doubt, ask to see photo ID and their solicitors permit.

Please continue to use your best judgment when encountering these door to door salespeople. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me or RG&E customer service. Thank you.

Please be aware that ALL RG&E employees carry photo ID to identify themselves as genuine employees. If you have any doubt about the true identity of someone knocking at your door, **do not open the door for them!** Always ask to see their ID through the peephole or a window. If you still have doubts about them, **call 911.**

Many scam artists and thieves operate door to door posing as meter readers, salesmen and volunteers collecting for charities. Every person who solicits door to door in the City of Rochester must obtain a permit to do so via City Hall. All persons conducting legitimate business door to door will produce a photo ID and a phone number to call to verify their authenticity.

NEVER allow strangers into your home for any reason (except a legitimate meter reader if necessary). If you open the door for someone you believe to be authentic, still ask them to remain on the front porch during your conversation. Legitimate people going door to door will be dressed appropriately to stand out in the weather.

NEVER give cash to someone at your door collecting for a charity. If you would like to donate to their cause, ask for an address where you can send a check or ask for their website address to donate online via credit card. (legitimate charitable organizations will have these things)

NEVER be “taken in” by a stranger at your door asking for: gas money because their car ran out of gas, or money for medicine for themselves or their baby, or money for food because they are homeless or they “will work for food”. Honest people rarely ask perfect strangers for help in this manner. If you are concerned about someone asking for your help, call 911. If they really need assistance, the Police Dept. has many agencies to contact that can fulfill their needs.

Calling 911 to report suspicious persons helps the Police to identify and apprehend scammers and thieves before they victimize your neighborhood. It also helps us locate those who really need our help. Help US to help you keep your neighborhood safe!

Please take a moment to review the attached Crime Bulletin regarding this topic. Please make copies and distribute them to your family and friends. Knowledge is power. Thank you.

Brian Bannerman  
Crime Prevention Officer  
Rochester NY Police Department  
East Division, SENSC  
846 South Clinton Av.  
Rochester, NY 14620  
585-428-7647

