

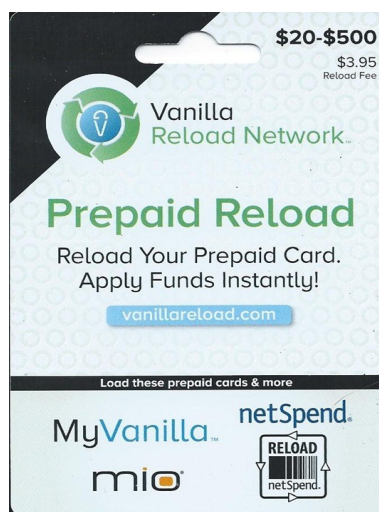


LAPD ALERT

SCAM ALERT

How the scam works:

These crimes are usually perpetrated via telephone. Scammers represent themselves as bill collectors for utilities (predominantly DWP, but also as collectors for the IRS, citations, etc.) and request that the victim purchase a pre-paid re-loadable debit card (Green Dot/Money Pak, but also Visa, MasterCard, Vanilla Card, etc.) for the specific amount of the bill charge and threaten that the victim's utilities will be shut off immediately, or the citation will go to warrant, etc., if the victim does not do so. The victim is then instructed to call the scammer back with the PIN (account number) to that card. Once the scammer has the PIN, he is able to transfer the funds to any other credit card - essentially a convenient and untraceable method of transferring money. The victim is left no recourse.



CRIME PREVENTION TIPS TO HELP YOU AVOID FALLING VICTIM TO THIS SCAM:

- Be suspicious of callers who demand immediate payment for any reason.
- Remember that anyone who has the number on a pre-paid re-loadable debit cards has access to the funds on the card.
- Never give out personal or financial information to anyone who emails or calls you unsolicited.
- Never wire money, provide debit or credit card numbers or Green Dot MoneyPak numbers to someone you do not know.
- Utility companies and government agencies will not contact you demanding immediate payment by pre-paid re-loadable debit cards.
- Scammers sometimes send false IRS emails to victims before calling them to scam them. If you know you owe taxes or you think you might owe taxes call the **IRS** at **1-800-829-1040**.