

Twice in a Week, Men Saying They're Utility Workers Try to Get into Darien Homes

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If you didn't ask a utility to send someone over to your home, be suspicious if someone shows up saying he or she is from Aquarion or Experian or Yankee Gas and wants to come in.

That just happened twice in a one-week period in Darien. In one case on Fitch Avenue on Nov. 23, an elderly man let a worker in, but he left after the resident asked a question indicating he was suspicious, and nothing is known to be taken. In another case, on Locust Hill Road on Nov. 16, an elderly woman wouldn't let the men indoors.

In each incident, the men who said they were utility workers — weren't. In each case, the men left in white vehicles.

In the Nov. 16 incident, shortly before 11 a.m., a 72-year-old woman told police that two men walked up to a side door of the house and rang the doorbell. They then walked down a short walkway leading to the driveway. The woman spoke to them through a closed window.

The two men were each about 40 years old, and both were wearing reflective orange vests with no markings on them. One man showed her an Eversource identification card that was hanging from a lanyard on his waist.

The men said they had been dispatched by the utility to the woman's address. The woman said she was unaware of any service call. One of the men said an "Eric" had called Eversource. But no one by that name

lives at the house, the woman later told police. She wouldn't let them inside, and they left in a white vehicle, she said.

The woman told police she called Eversource and was told the electric utility had no calls for service from that neighborhood and no record of any workers assigned there for any reason. Police also called Eversource and were told the same.

On Monday, the Fitch Avenue resident, an elderly man, told police a man saying he was from the water company (which is Aquarion, although police didn't indicate the man gave the company name) had come by and said he needed to check the water inside the house because some water in the area had been poisoned.

The resident let the man in. The man told the resident that several people had already gone to the hospital, and the man checked water from several faucets in the house when the resident asked the man whether what he was doing was legal. The man soon left. It's possible that some loose change was stolen, the resident said, but he wasn't sure.

On June 11, someone purporting to be from Aquarion Water Co. was allowed by an elderly resident of Ledge Road to enter her house, and while he was there, distracting her, someone else entered and [stole cash and valuables from a bedroom](#).

Advice from utility companies on thieves pretending to be workers

Have these phone numbers handy so you can call the utilities if someone rings your doorbell and says he's a utility worker that you weren't already expecting:

- **EVERSOURCE** (formerly Connecticut Light & Power and Yankee Gas) — 800-286-2000 (available from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday)
- **AQUARION WATER CO.** —800-732-9678
- **DARIEN POLICE** — Call 203-662-5300 or, if there's an emergency or you know you're in danger, call 911.

Back on June 15, Darienite.com published a statement from Aquarion Water Co. [advising customers what to do](#) if someone knocks on your door and says he's a worker from the utility who wants to come inside.

Here's part of what the company advised:

Aquarion advises that residents refuse entrance into their home without first seeing photo identification.

“Aquarion Water Company employees follow strict protocols when entering customers’ homes and

businesses, which include showing the customer an Aquarion photo ID,” said Charles V. Firlotte, Aquarion President and CEO. “We also encourage any customer who is unsure or has concerns to call our Customer Service Department.”

Aquarion Water Company employees and contractors are required to carry company-issued photo identification at all times and to present such identification upon request when entering a customer’s home.

Eversource also has advice on their website about [avoiding scams perpetrated by thieves](#) portraying themselves as utility employees. Much of their online warning is about phone scams, but some of it refers to people knocking on your door:

Most scams threaten customers with disconnection of electric service if they do not make a same-day payment. Customers may be contacted either by phone or in-person at their home or business.

Customers are advised to never allow an unexpected visitor to enter their home. Always call Eversource directly to confirm any offers or requests.

Immediately report any incidents of potential fraud or identity theft to local law enforcement.

Eversource almost never makes unsolicited house visits. Exceptions might include a collections activity for past due balances (which includes written, advanced notice for any customer schedule for disconnection), accessing our equipment to ensure safe and effective operation, or if there is another safety concern. [...]

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Customers who are scheduled for disconnection due to nonpayment receive written notice that includes the actions they can take to maintain service.

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All employees carry company-issued identification, and any electrical contractors working with us carry documentation explaining the nature and location of their work. Customers can always call us to verify this information.

[...]

Examples of Recent Scam Attempts: [...]

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A scammer knocked on a customer's door. He was wearing a badge that was hard to read and had a poor copy of what appeared to be an electric bill. He said several customers in the area were complaining that the rates were too high, so he wanted to check the meter to find out the customer's usage.

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An unsolicited salesman knocked on a customer's door stating there was a problem with her utilities and she had failed to respond to urgent messages. The salesman insisted that he could get her a rebate on her current energy bill and demanded to see a copy of the bill.