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For immediate release – Friday, March 2, 2007.
Contact Bob Brammer – 515-281-6699.

Storm Warning: Be Wary of Impostors Posing as Utility Workers

Statement of the Attorney General's Office:

Des Moines. The Attorney General's Office is advising electric utility customers to ask for identification from persons who come to their homes and claim to be utility workers. Customers who are approached by utility workers should look for official insignia, ask for an official I.D. badge or identification, and **report any suspicious persons immediately to the utility and to the sheriff or other local law enforcement agency.**

Background: Alliant Energy has received a handful of reports from customers without power who said they were approached by persons apparently posing as Alliant workers. In one scenario, the supposed worker said the customers could have their power restored that day but would need to make a special payment or "deposit." In another scenario, the supposed worker said the customers' power was going to be off for another week and that they should leave their home and go to a public shelter. Alliant said its workers would not conduct either scenario. The second scenario raised a fear that an impostor was "casing" the customer's place for a possible break-in. Alliant said the reports came to its call centers from consumers in eastern and central Iowa.

The Attorney General's Office contacted Mid-American Energy and the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, and neither had received similar reports.

In this situation, the Attorney General's Office advises utility customers without power to:

- Beware of the possibility of impostors posing as utility workers. Utility workers will NOT ask for payment to restore power.
- Look for official utility insignia on vehicles and uniforms – and insist that workers present an I.D. badge or official identification.
- Call the utility to check the situation and report suspicious persons or activity.
- Contact the Sheriff or local law enforcement immediately to report suspicious activity. Try to get license numbers and descriptions of persons or vehicles.
- If possible, watch for and report suspicious activity at neighbors' properties as well.

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On the Web: www.iowaAttorneyGeneral.org.