



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Public Utilities Department

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 28, 2011

### **San Diegans Urged to Protect Themselves from Utility Service Imposters**

SAN DIEGO – From time to time there are reports of water or sewer utility worker imposters who try to collect money or request to check a household's water or sewer system. These imposters may attempt to pass as a City employee to gain access to a person's home. San Diego residents are urged to be vigilant and protect themselves and their properties from these imposters with the following recommended tips and information:

- Report any suspicious personnel to the Police Department by calling 9-1-1 or the 24-hour non-emergency line at (619) 531-2000 as soon as possible. You can also check with the City's Public Utilities Department by calling (619) 515-3525.
- Check for an employee badge and uniform. All City employees have a City identification badge.
- Check their vehicle. Public Utilities Department employees usually drive a vehicle or truck displaying the City of San Diego logo. Some City employees, such as meter readers, drive personal vehicles; however, proper badge and uniform should be worn at all times.
- The majority of water samples are taken from outside of the home, so entering the home is usually not necessary.
- Usually Public Utilities workers are not responsible for fixing problems or testing inside private residences and almost never have reason to ask for entry.
- Typically, the Public Utilities Department schedules an appointment with the resident to discuss water quality or take a water sample.
- Employees do not collect a past-due bill in person or engage in door-to-door sales while on the job. In addition, a City utility employee does not deliver rebates or refunds.
- Ask for their supervisor's name and phone number and check.
- Never let anyone in your home if you are uncomfortable.

Residents who have any questions about whether a person at their door is a City of San Diego employee should call the Public Utilities Department's Emergency Hotline at (619) 515-3525 or San Diego Police Department 24-hour, non-emergency line at (619) 531-2000.

California state law protects consumers from false and misleading advertising about water treatment devices. The California Department of Public Health must certify all devices that are sold to remove "health related" contaminants. Certification is NOT required for devices to improve the taste or odor of water. The law explicitly forbids sales people from making false or misleading claims concerning contaminants in the drinking water or whether or not the customer's health or safety is at risk. More information is available at [www.sandiego.gov/water/operations/imposters.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/water/operations/imposters.shtml)

###