



Dear Clients and Community Partners,

On July 13, 2012 the Seattle Times ran an [article](#) revealing a nationwide scam pretending to provide energy assistance. In the scam, victims are told they may receive up to \$1,000 toward their home energy bill under a "new program from the Obama Administration."

This "new program" does not exist.

Centerstone is the only provider of federally sponsored energy assistance funds within the Seattle city boundaries. This funding is seasonal and will not be available again until winter of 2012, pending federal approval.

The information requested by the scammers is similar to the information we collect for our program with one exception - the scam artists ask for bank routing information with a promise of transferring the benefit directly to the client's bank account. In most cases, energy assistance payments from Centerstone go directly to the energy company (Seattle City Light and/or Puget Sound Energy), and in situations where paying directly is needed, the payment is made by check directly to the client.

To protect you from this scam, Centerstone wants to remind you that our agency NEVER asks for bank account numbers, bank routing numbers, or approval for electronic funds transfer to or from your bank.

While Centerstone DOES contact clients by phone, we DO NOT ask for Personally Identifiable Information such as Social Security Numbers or Bank Account Numbers over the phone for any reason. If you are uncertain of the validity of an individual contacting you regarding Energy Assistance, please contact our office at 206-812-4940.

Sincerely,

The Centerstone Energy Assistance Team