



cannot be underestimated as it is designed to produce oil for up to 25 years.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2007/BUSINESS/12/24/north.slope.ap/index.html>

2. *December 20, Platts* – (Oklahoma) **OG&E says ice storm cost it more than \$36 million in damages.** Oklahoma Gas & Electric (OG&E) on Thursday said the December 10 ice storm that knocked out power to some 300,000 of its customers has to date cost the utility \$36.6 million. The company said it plans to file a request with the Oklahoma Corporation Commission in early 2008 to recoup those costs – and any additional costs it may incur – through a storm-recovery rider on customer bills. An OG&E spokesman said that the storm damaged or destroyed about 400 poles and more than 1,000 crossarms, adding that a complete damage assessment has not been completed. The spokesman also said that OG&E on Thursday completed the restoration of power to the last of its customers who lost service during the storm and who are able to take service. The ice storm affected more OG&E customers than any other event in the utility's 105-year history, the utility said. Most of the outages were in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area.

Source:

<http://www.platts.com/Electric%20Power/News/6673708.xml?sub=Electric%20Power&p=Electric%20Power/News&?undefined&undefined>

3. *December 20, Platts* – (Florida) **Jacksonville coal-fired units restart after chemical explosion.** Jacksonville Electric Authority said Thursday that its two coal-fired power plant units that went offline after Wednesday's chemical-plant explosion in northern Jacksonville were not damaged and were restarted late Wednesday. A JEA spokeswoman said that the explosion at a chemical plant near the municipal utility's two, 300-MW units tripped the transmission line that connects the two units to the utility grid and forced the units offline early Wednesday afternoon. She said that immediately after the explosion JEA evacuated all non-essential personnel from the station; six workers stayed to ensure the units' safe shutdown, and donned protective gear because of the uncertainty about air quality in the aftermath of the explosion and resulting fire. The loss of the units for roughly six hours did not result in any power interruption for JEA customers.

Source:

<http://www.platts.com/Coal/News/6672118.xml?sub=Coal&p=Coal/News&?undefined&undefined>

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## **Chemical Industry Sector**

4. *December 23, Columbian* – (Washington) **Chemical spill closes northbound Gee Creek rest stop.** A chemical spill shut down the northbound portion of the Gee Creek rest stop near Ridgefield, Washington, early this morning. An unknown amount of hydrochloric acid escaped from a tanker truck that was transporting the fluid, said a firefighter-spokesman with the Vancouver Fire Department. The truck driver noticed a leak and immediately reported it. Firefighters from Clark County Fire District 11 in Battle Ground responded. They were soon joined by Washington State Patrol troopers,

Department of Ecology employees and the Vancouver Fire Department's hazardous materials team. NRC Environmental Services, a Portland-based contract clean up company, was also dispatched to the scene. The spill was contained and it was quickly determined that some acid had made its way into an oil and water separator and into a retention pond. A small amount of acid also seeped into Gee Creek. It is not clear how much acid spilled. The rest stop was closed indefinitely as a precautionary measure. Source: [http://www.columbian.com/news/localNews/2007/12/12232007\\_Chemical-spill-closes-northbound-Gee-Creek-rest-stop.cfm](http://www.columbian.com/news/localNews/2007/12/12232007_Chemical-spill-closes-northbound-Gee-Creek-rest-stop.cfm)

5. *December 22, Associated Press* – (Idaho) **Company agrees to pay fine for mishandling chemical waste at INL.** The company that operates the Idaho National Laboratory has agreed to pay \$61,000 in fines for mishandling chemical waste at the eastern Idaho facility. The Environmental Protection Agency officials say Battelle Energy Alliance and its project contractor, Wheeler Electric, mishandled waste containing Polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs. The problems stem from a July 2006 spill of PCBs when a Wheeler employee removed oily cable from a conduit near a power plant on the INL facility. EPA officials say the cable oil had levels of PCBs well above allowable levels. Contamination occurred when workers later dragged the oily cable through the building, then left the job site with contaminated boots and clothing. Source: [http://www.ktvb.com/news/localnews/stories/ktvbn-dec2207-inl\\_fine.3ffbf3e5.html](http://www.ktvb.com/news/localnews/stories/ktvbn-dec2207-inl_fine.3ffbf3e5.html)
6. *December 21, Associated Press* – (Florida) **Team to investigate deadly Jacksonville chemical plant fire.** Hazmat teams stamped out flare-ups Thursday in the smoldering remains of a chemical plant, while federal safety officials planned to investigate the explosion that killed four people and injured at least 14. The explosion occurred Wednesday at T2 Laboratories Inc., which makes chemical solvents and fuel additives. The names of the victims have not yet been released. A U.S. Chemical Safety Board team will investigate the blaze. Source: <http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/local/florida/sfl-fiffire1221sbdec21,0,5444380.story?track=rss>

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## **Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector**

7. *December 22, Tri-City Herald*– (Washington) **Hanford waste treatment goal met.** In Washington, Hanford workers have finished treating enough low-level radioactive waste mixed with hazardous chemicals to fill 31,346 drums. The work was completed Thursday in time for the Department of Energy and its contractor, Fluor Hanford, to meet a legally binding Tri-Party Agreement requirement for treating that quantity of waste by the end of the year. About half of the waste has been in storage awaiting treatment. The rest of the waste treated to meet the deadline includes waste recently dug up at Hanford and newly created waste, such as lab equipment and protective clothing contaminated during Hanford cleanup work. The year started with uncertainty over the Hanford budget until Congress passed a continuing resolution and Hanford officials learned exactly how much money they could spend on cleanup efforts.

Source: <http://www.tradingmarkets.com/.site/news/Stock%20News/939201/>

8. *December 21, Associated Press* – (Arizona) **Nuclear plant called safe despite problems.** The margin of safety at the nation's largest nuclear power plant has narrowed, but the problems do not pose a threat to the public, according to federal regulators. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has increased oversight at the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station outside Phoenix since March, spending 8,500 hours on the project. During a meeting at the triple-reactor plant Wednesday night, the commission said it found 37 more-than-minor performance deficiencies affecting operations. Most of the problems cited involved laxness in procedures, incomplete documentation, and inefficient problem-solving efforts. There has been a notable decline in Palo Verde's performance since 2003, said the chief of the reactor-projects division of the NRC, who led the investigation. But the chief added that his team determined the plant is operating safely even though it has seen degradation in safety performance.  
Source: <http://www.azstarnet.com/sn/metro/217207.php>
9. *December 20, Associated Press* – (Massachusetts) **MIT cited for nuclear safety violations.** The Massachusetts Institute of Technology was cited for two violations at its nuclear research reactor after a worker was exposed to a surprisingly high dose of radiation, federal regulators said Thursday. A special inspection found MIT failed to make reasonable checks to evaluate the magnitude and extent of radiation levels present at work areas as required by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. MIT also failed to provide the worker adequate safety training as required for all employees who are likely to receive a dose of more than 100 millirems of radiation exposure in a year. On October 17, the university in Cambridge reported that one of the reactor's operators had a radiation measurement of more than four rems for the period between July 1 and September 30. That accounts for more than 80 percent of the total radiation that a worker can be safely exposed to during an entire year. All other employees' radiation exposure measurements for the same time period were normal.  
Source: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071221/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/mit\\_nuclear\\_reactor\\_1](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071221/ap_on_re_us/mit_nuclear_reactor_1)

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## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

10. *December 24, Military and Aerospace Electronics*– (Mississippi) **Navy gives Northrop Grumman \$1 billion order to build 9th San Antonio-class ship.** Northrop Grumman Corp. won a \$1 billion U.S. Navy contract modification to finish design and begin construction on the ninth San Antonio (LPD 17)-class amphibious transport dock ship, which will be named USS Somerset (LPD 25). Construction on the Somerset will continue at the Northrop Grumman Ship Systems Sector in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Coupled with the advance procurement contract funded for LPD 25 in November 2006, the total contract is valued at more than \$1.2 billion.  
Source:  
[http://mae.pennnet.com/display\\_article/315633/32/ARTCL/none/EXECW/1/Navy-gives-Northrop-Grumman-\\$1-billion-order-to-build-9th-San-Antonio-class-ship/](http://mae.pennnet.com/display_article/315633/32/ARTCL/none/EXECW/1/Navy-gives-Northrop-Grumman-$1-billion-order-to-build-9th-San-Antonio-class-ship/)

11. *December 20, Defense News* – (National) **White House may shift most wartime funding into base budget.** Starting in fiscal 2010, the White House may fold most wartime funding into its base Pentagon budget request, Pentagon sources said. Critics have accused the administration of using emergency supplemental requests, which have traditionally been used to cover unexpected operational needs, to pay for weapons outside the normal authorization and appropriations process. About one-quarter of the \$190 billion requested as a supplement to the 2008 defense budget is for equipment programs that are not directly related to military operations in Afghanistan or Iraq. The administration says the supplementals cover costs that are legitimately outside the base budget. Service secretaries fear the maneuver could backfire, making it easier for Congress to shift tens of billions of defense dollars to health care, roads, or other things. But some at the Department of Defense welcome the shift as a step to regain control over the budget and planning process.  
Source: <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=3264284&C=america>

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## **Banking and Finance Sector**

12. *December 20, WISN 12 Milwaukee* – (Wisconsin) **Phishers try to scam head of bank.** The chief operating officer at West Bend Savings Bank in Wisconsin said he received a phone call recently with an automated message offering a new fraud protection feature to his debit card. The message instructed him to provide some information to verify the account. Your bank already knows your account number, the bank official said, so there is no reason to provide it. The personal identification number is something only the customer should know. The same scam has been used at various banks, large and small, and by telephone and e-mail. So far, a few people in West Bend have fallen for it, and the scammers have gotten away with a total of about \$1,300 from the victims' accounts.  
Source: <http://www.wisn.com/news/14902849/detail.html>
13. *December 20, Wesh.com* – (National) **Experts: ID thieves target holiday vacationers.** Experts said identity thieves are working overtime during the holidays. Many are stealing peoples' identities while they are away from home. An identity prevention expert said staying home may actually be a blessing in disguise this time of year because holiday travelers are particularly vulnerable to identity theft. The co-founder and CEO of LifeLock said that, for instance, air travelers should never leave boarding passes on the plane because they give thieves your name and tells them you're not at home. A simple web search will give the thieves your address. Putting too much information on Luggage tags is also a big help to scammers, he said. "With the identity theft being such a big problem, on your bag tags, you need to be putting just name and phone number. You'll coordinate with the airline where to come deliver the bag," he said. Traveling by car also has its risks, according to the expert. Always print and take your gas receipts because you don't want the next customer printing out your receipt for you because "There are still some receipts that actually have your full credit card information." If people know they will be out of town, experts said it is a good idea to alert their credit card company about where they will be so they can flag their account early.  
Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22348574/>

## **Transportation Sector**

14. *December 23, Associated Press* – (Nebraska) **Bomb threat forces Southwest flight to make emergency landing.** A Southwest Airlines flight headed to Connecticut made an emergency landing in Omaha, Nebraska, after a person who missed the flight allegedly made a bomb threat, an airline spokeswoman said Sunday. No explosives were found, and the 137 passengers continued on to Hartford, Connecticut, after the unexpected layover of just over three hours, the spokeswoman said. She added that the passenger who missed the flight made a statement about a bag and then made a bomb threat specific to Flight 1018.  
Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,318073,00.html>
  
15. *December 23, Associated Press* – (Colorado) **JetBlue flight diverts to Denver.** JetBlue Airways Corp. said one of its early Sunday flights from San Francisco to New York was diverted to Denver because of a disruptive passenger. A JetBlue spokeswoman said she did not have details on what the passenger did, but says the captain landed in Denver as a precaution. A police spokesman did not have details on the passenger's actions but said the man was taken to a hospital for a mental health evaluation. The plane continued to New York after the customer got off the aircraft.  
Source:  
[http://cbs4denver.com/coloradowire/22.0.html?type=local&state=CO&category=n&file\\_name=CO--FlightDiverted.xml](http://cbs4denver.com/coloradowire/22.0.html?type=local&state=CO&category=n&file_name=CO--FlightDiverted.xml)
  
16. *December 21, WKMG 6 Orlando* – (Texas) **Flight makes emergency landing after explosion noise, drastic drop.** An American Airlines flight headed to Orlando International Airport was forced to make an emergency landing after the plane made a drastic drop in altitude following a turbine failure in an engine. American Airlines confirmed that shortly after the flight departed from Dallas Thursday night, there was a turbine failure in the right engine of the plane. Officials said there was an explosion-type noise and a drastic decrease in altitude. The flight was forced to turn around and make an emergency landing in Dallas. There were no injuries reported.  
Source: <http://www.local6.com/news/14903987/detail.html>
  
17. *December 20, Associated Press* – (Illinois) **2nd close call reported at FAA center.** Another error by controllers at an air traffic center put planes too close to each other over central Illinois, but they were never in danger of colliding, the Federal Aviation Administration said Thursday. It was the second error by controllers at the FAA's Chicago Center radar facility in Aurora reported this week. The Boeing 737 jet came within 3.6 miles horizontally of a Beechcraft Super King Air 200 about 20 miles from Springfield on Wednesday morning, said a FAA spokesman. Minimum spacing between planes is 5 miles horizontally or 1,000 feet vertically. A controller in training at the FAA's radar center in Aurora told the pilot of the 737 headed northeast to descend to 24,000 feet from 27,000 feet. The trainee's instructions caused the airplanes to be "closer than they should have been," but the planes had already passed each other when

they flew within 3.6 miles, the spokesman said. Controllers in the Chicago region have said they are weary and more error-prone after having to work repeated six-day weeks due to staffing level changes. The FAA has said that staffing levels are adequate despite controllers' complaints.

Source:

[http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D8TLIJ80&show\\_article=1&catnum=1](http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=D8TLIJ80&show_article=1&catnum=1)

18. *December 20, KYW 3 Philadelphia* – (New Jersey) **Suspicious package snarls traffic on GSP.** The northbound lanes of the Garden State Parkway were closed Thursday at the height of the evening rush while police investigated a suspicious package found on the roadside. Authorities said traffic was diverted off the parkway at Exit 50 in New Gretna, Burlington County, New Jersey, after a suspicious package was found at mile post 54. Police deemed the package safe and all lanes were reopened.

Source: <http://cbs3.com/local/Garden.State.Parkway.2.615326.html>

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## **Postal and Shipping Sector**

19. *December 20, Seattle Post-Intelligencer* – (Washington) **Phony grenade causes scare.** What appeared to be a grenade addressed to Washington State Supreme Court Justice Richard Sanders turned out to be a novelty item, but it caused a scare when postal workers discovered it early Thursday. Workers at the state's mail service in downtown Olympia made the discovery while taking a routine X-ray of the package, said the spokesman for the state's General Administration Department. When workers saw what appeared to be a hand grenade, they called 911. Olympia police arrived and contacted the Washington State Patrol. Troopers evacuated the building, X-rayed the package once more and confirmed that the object looked like a grenade. They took the package inside a vehicle specially outfitted for their bomb squad to a facility in Shelton, then blew it apart with a water cannon. Inside, they found a plaque with a grenade mounted on it.

Source: [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/344337\\_grenade21.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/344337_grenade21.html)

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## **Agriculture and Food Sector**

20. *December 23, HealthDay* – (National) **Canned green beans recalled for possible botulism.** Cans labeled "GFS Fancy Blue Lake Cut Green Beans" are being recalled because they may be contaminated with C botulinum bacteria, the deadly bacterium that causes botulism, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says. The institutional sized 6-pound, 5-ounce cans were sold at GFS Marketplace stores in 11 states. They were labeled with lot code 19H7FL and UPC code 93901 11873. To date, the FDA said it has no reports of illness from the recalled product, manufactured by the New Era Canning Co., of New Era, Michigan. The beans were distributed in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The FDA said it does not believe they were initially distributed outside the U.S. For more information, please see:

<http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/NEWS/2007/NEW01764.html>.

Source:

<http://www.forbes.com/forbeslife/health/feeds/hscout/2007/12/23/hscout611260.html>

21. *December 23, Palladium-Item* – (National) **Energy bill holds major impact on agriculture.** The energy bill signed into law Wednesday will have a bigger, longer-term impact on U.S. agriculture than the pending farm bill, an agricultural economist said. The bill increases the Renewable Fuels Standard to 35 billion gallons by 2022, which provides a roadmap for renewable fuel production. Cornstarch ethanol will contribute 15 billion gallons per year of the total renewable fuels and about 13.5 billion gallons of this capacity will be in place by the end of next year. U.S. corn farmers will not be able to meet the huge demand for corn by the rapidly expanding ethanol plants until the 2009 crop year, the economist said. Grazing lands will be targeted to shift to fuel crops such as prairie grasses, especially in the mid-South and western portion of the Great Plains, Conservation Reserve Program acres may shift toward cellulosic energy crops, and some forests and woodlands may also be shifted to energy crops in portions of the country, the economist said.

Source: <http://www.pal->

[item.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071223/NEWS01/712230329/1008](http://www.pal-item.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071223/NEWS01/712230329/1008)

22. *December 21, Salinas Californian* – (National; International) **Mexico ends spinach ban.** Mexico has announced that after a 16-month ban, it will allow imports of California spinach - as long as it is grown and shipped by member-companies of the California Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement. Mexican officials banned the state's leafy greens from their country in September 2006, after E. coli-contaminated bagged fresh spinach sickened more than 200 Americans and killed at least three. Canada, which also barred U.S. spinach after the outbreak, reduced its ban in October 2006 to spinach from Monterey and San Benito counties, where officials had said the greens were most likely contaminated. Investigators later said it appears the contamination occurred in San Benito County. Relatively speaking, the ban did not cost the industry financially. In 2005, the last full year before the E. coli outbreak devastated sales, California sold about \$155 million of fresh spinach, about \$2 million of which went south of the border.

Source:

<http://www.californianonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071221/NEWS01/712210318/100>

23. *December 21, KPHO 5 Phoenix* – (National) **Health alert issued for tainted meat.** A public health alert has been issued for ground beef sold at Safeway supermarkets in five states, including Arizona, where at least 16 people have been sickened. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) said fresh ground beef products that may have been ground and sold at Safeway supermarkets in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and New Mexico between September 19 and November 5 are believed to be contaminated with multi-drug resistant Salmonella. Epidemiological investigations and a case control study conducted by the California Department of Public Health, Arizona Department of Health Services, and the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention found an association between the fresh ground beef products and 38 illnesses, FSIS said. The alert was issued after FSIS said it could not identify specific lots. FSIS said it had no reason to believe that the products were still available for sale.

Source: <http://www.kpho.com/news/14903000/detail.html>

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## **Water Sector**

24. *December 21, WWAY 3 Wilmington* – (North Carolina) **NC water crisis affecting Triangle health facilities.** The drought is more than an inconvenience, according to North Carolina’s epidemiologist. “Right now it’s the most serious health problem we’re facing. That’s because the triangle is a hub for healthcare,” he said. Medical centers are some of Durham County’s major water users. Durham’s Lake Michie has 38 days of water left. If that is used up, “It would mean a difference in our operations if it came to that point. It would mean potable water for drinking and sterilizations.” It would also mean water shipped in from outside the state, as a temporary solution. Reducing water usage would be investigated as a long term solution. From fixing leaks to using hand sanitizers instead of soap and water, local hospitals say they are doing everything they can to conserve.  
Source: [http://www.wwaytv3.com/nc\\_water\\_crisis\\_affecting\\_triangle\\_health\\_facilities/12/2007](http://www.wwaytv3.com/nc_water_crisis_affecting_triangle_health_facilities/12/2007)
25. *December 20, Detroit News* – (National) **Democrats co-sponsor Great Lakes bill.** The three Democratic presidential candidates representing Great Lakes states in Congress are co-sponsors of legislation that would restore the unique water body by cleaning up toxic hot spots, upgrading sewage systems to reduce accidental and emergency overflows, expanding wetlands, and stopping invasive species. In addition, two of the democratic front runners recently signed a pledge designed by a bipartisan group of members of Congress to fund the Great Lakes cleanup, estimated to cost at least \$20 billion, and appoint a Cabinet-level official to oversee the effort.  
Source: <http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071220/POLITICS/712200356>
26. *December 20, Washington Post* – (Virginia) **Closed dump set to be put on EPA’s list.** The Hidden Lane Landfill in northern Virginia is the probable source of trichloroethylene found in nearby residential wells, local and federal officials said. TCE, a chemical associated with several types of cancer that is used to clean grease off metal, was first detected in wells in Broad Run Farms in 1989. The Environmental Protection Agency proposed in September that the approximately 30-acre site be added to its Superfund National Priorities List. In a presentation Tuesday before the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, an EPA official said he expects the site to be added to the list March 8. One county supervisor estimated that the clean up would take a decade.  
Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/18/AR2007121802543.html>

## **Public Health and Healthcare Sector**

27. *December 22, Reuters*– (International) **Poland reports fresh outbreak of H5N1 bird flu.** Laboratory tests have confirmed a fresh outbreak of deadly H5N1 avian flu in the same area of northern Poland where the virus was discovered earlier this month, PAP news agency said on Saturday. Preparations were under way to cull birds on four poultry farms in the village of Sadlowo Parcele. The latest bird flu center is within the contamination zone of a December 8 outbreak in the village of Karniszyn, from where the virus is believed to have been transmitted. This is the eighth case of the H5N1 bird flu virus in Poland since the beginning of December, when an outbreak was reported at a turkey farm in the Plock area, 50 miles north-west of Warsaw. One of the European Union's leading poultry producers, Poland exported 230,000 tons of poultry to European markets last year.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/europeCrisis/idUSL22186559>

28. *December 21, Journal Gazette*– (Indiana) **Ready for disasters.** Compared with all other states, Indiana appears prepared should disaster hit. The problem could be that Hoosiers are not well prepared to pay for it. In its fifth annual report comparing state public health preparedness, the Trust for America's Health found that Indiana has adequate plans should an influenza pandemic, bioterrorism attack, or natural disaster happen. But the health policy research group found that the state's financing for public health is lacking. Indiana has not increased or maintained its level of spending for public health services since 2005. As of November, Indiana had bought all 650,912 doses of antiviral treatments the federal government set aside for the state's use in an influenza pandemic – one of the top preparedness indicators, according to the report. It also found that Indiana completed nine of 10 goals in key areas of preparedness. Indiana and 14 other states met nine of the Trust's 10 categories for preparedness.

Source:

<http://www.journalgazette.net/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071221/EDIT07/712210389>

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## **Government Facilities Sector**

29. *December 21, Bridgetown News* – (New Jersey) **Bomb scare at courthouse.** A bomb threat at Cumberland County Courthouse in New Jersey caused an evacuation Thursday afternoon, and all afternoon proceedings were canceled. The threat came around 2:20 p.m., when a person with a male voice called the switchboard at the courthouse and said, "There's a bomb in the courthouse." Bomb-sniffing dogs had searched half of the building and found nothing suspicious, according to an official from the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department.

Source: <http://www.nj.com/news/bridgeton/local/index.ssf?/base/news-13/119821920364940.xml&coll=10>

30. *December 21, Foster's Daily Democrat* – (New Hampshire) **Pepper spray leak clears District Court.** The District Court building in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was evacuated Thursday morning after a can of pepper spray left near the desk next to the metal detector leaked. The chief of security said the leaking can of spray, which was being held by security for someone visiting the courthouse, was discovered about 9 a.m. and the building evacuated as a safety precaution. The can was believed to have leaked all-natural cayenne pepper spray into the building's ventilation system. There were no injuries, although a woman who is 14 weeks pregnant was checked out by rescue personnel and released from care at the courthouse.

Source:

[http://www.fosters.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071221/GJNEWS\\_01/466020947](http://www.fosters.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071221/GJNEWS_01/466020947)

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## **Emergency Services Sector**

31. *December 21, Philadelphia Daily News* – (Pennsylvania) **Philadelphia EMS reaction time is slow, report says.** Philadelphia Fire Department ambulances are not getting critical help to the city's injured and ill fast enough, according to a city controller's report on the emergency-medical-response system. While the department manages to get fire engines to emergencies quickly enough to administer basic medical aid, response times for ambulances have steadily deteriorated in recent years, the report found. Sources familiar with the review - being released December 21 - said that city ambulances are arriving within nine minutes only about 60 percent of the time, well below the industry standard of arrivals within nine minutes 90 percent of the time. Nearly a third of ambulance runs take 10 minutes or more to arrive. The EMS system came under criticism last year when it took more than 15 minutes for an ambulance to respond to the heart attack that killed a former school board president. Family members issued a statement praising the Fire Department's response, but union activists and some citizens said the EMS system was under severe strain, leading the city comptroller to order the review. Sources said the review found the EMS system has too few ambulances, a demoralized staff with high turnover, inadequate dispatching technology, and faces increasing demand for emergency medical services. See the report in pdf: [http://www.philadelphiacontroller.org/publications/audits/02\\_12\\_20\\_07\\_EMS\\_21106.pdf](http://www.philadelphiacontroller.org/publications/audits/02_12_20_07_EMS_21106.pdf).

Source: [http://www.emsresponder.com/web/online/Top-EMS-News/Philadelphia-EMS-Reaction-Time-is-Slow--Report-Says/1\\$6768](http://www.emsresponder.com/web/online/Top-EMS-News/Philadelphia-EMS-Reaction-Time-is-Slow--Report-Says/1$6768)

32. *December 21, EMSResponder.com News* – (National) **Congress passes FY 2008 omnibus appropriations bill.** EMS officials were pleased with the passage this week of the FY '08 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which includes funding for EMS-related issues, and is expected to be signed by the President next week. The Senate committee had failed in its attempt to make the appropriations bill veto-proof, and President Bush had threatened to veto any legislation that was above his projected budget. However, Congress worked out a final compromise package and the bill's passage was announced this Wednesday. The vice president of Cornerstone Government Affairs said EMS-related issues always undergo tough scrutiny. The lobbyist for EMS

groups wrote Wednesday, “The first bit of good news is that the National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS) received \$750,000. As you will recall, the House did not have any money in the Transportation Appropriations bill for it. The Senate had \$1 million for the program in its version of the bill. We ended up above the halfway mark which is a huge success.” She said Traumatic Brain injury received \$10 million. Additional funding information for other programs will be available soon. In addition, the following report language was included in the Homeland Security Appropriations bill: “FEMA is directed, in conjunction with the Office of Health Affairs, to report to the Committee regarding the current state of disaster preparedness capabilities of emergency medical services and the capabilities required to meet future preparedness goals. This report is due no later than five months after the enactment of this Act and shall include an analysis of the gap between current and target capabilities. FEMA is directed to include in its grants guidance, language requiring State and local governments to include EMS providers in their Statewide Homeland Security Plans as well as their UASI plans. If no State or local funding is provided to EMS, the State should justify lack of funding through demonstrating related targeted capabilities have been met or identify other pressing priorities.”

Source: [http://www.emsresponder.com/web/online/Top-EMS-News/Congress-Passes-FY-2008-Omnibus-Appropriations-Bill/1\\$6774](http://www.emsresponder.com/web/online/Top-EMS-News/Congress-Passes-FY-2008-Omnibus-Appropriations-Bill/1$6774)

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## **Information Technology**

33. *December 22, New Scientist Tech* – (National) **Wi-Fi routers are vulnerable to viruses.** The viral infection that began in Cambridge, Massachusetts, somewhere between MIT and Harvard University, failed to cross the Charles River into Boston; in California, the San Francisco Bay stymied a similar attack. This was not a biological infection, but the first simulation of an airborne computer virus. It spread by hopping between wireless routers, which are more susceptible to viruses than computers, said a representative of Indiana University in Bloomington. “We forget that routers are mini-computers. They have memory, they are networked and they are programmable.” And since they are not scanned for viruses, or protected by existing firewalls, they are easy targets. He knows of no actual router viruses, but says such a virus could steal credit-card numbers, make the router send out spam and block incoming security patches. Routers close enough together to communicate — less than 100 meters apart — could act as a vast network for viruses. Although routers do not usually communicate with each other, it would be easy enough for malicious hackers to use a virus to switch on that capability if the router’s encryption system were weak, he said.  
Source: [http://technology.newscientist.com/channel/tech/mg19626356.400-wifi-routers-are-vulnerable-to-viruses.html?feedId=online-news\\_rss20](http://technology.newscientist.com/channel/tech/mg19626356.400-wifi-routers-are-vulnerable-to-viruses.html?feedId=online-news_rss20)
34. *December 21, IDG News* – (International) **Russians close to prosecuting ‘Pinch’ Trojan authors.** Russia may soon prosecute the authors of the “Pinch” Trojan, an easy-to-use malicious software program available on the Internet that steals a variety of data. The head of Russia’s Federal Security Services said earlier this week that Pinch’s authors had been identified and would be taken to court, according to a blog posting by

Russian security vendor Kaspersky Lab. Kaspersky said the arrest of the Pinch writers would be on the same level as the 2005 prosecution of a German man for creating the NetSky and Sasser worms, which caused thousands of infected computers to crash worldwide. With Pinch, “it’s impossible to estimate what financial losses have been caused over the years since this Trojan first saw the light of day,” Kaspersky said. Pinch’s sellers would customize the program for buyers and offer support, illustrating a growing underground economy for hacking tools, Kaspersky said. Thousands of versions of Pinch, which comes in Russian and English language versions, are still circulating on the Internet. Kaspersky said its security software can detect some 4,000 variants of Pinch, where the basic code is the same but aspects of the program have been modified in order to evade detection by security software. Pinch has a highly developed user interface that can be used for sorting information it steals off other computers, according to F-Secure. It can steal e-mail account passwords, pilfer other password information stored in the Internet Explorer, Firefox and Opera browsers, and snap screenshots. That stolen information can also be encrypted before it is sent back to the hacker, according to Panda Security, another security vendor. Pinch could also be customized to have the victimized computer join a botnet, or a network of computers set up to hide other malicious activity by the hacker. Botnets are often used to send spam or mount other hacking attacks.

Source:

[http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9053922&source=rss\\_topic17](http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9053922&source=rss_topic17)

35. *December 21, vnunet.com* – (International) **Orkut worm hits 700,000 users.** A fast-moving worm has infected more than 700,000 users on Google’s Orkut social network in just 24 hours. The Portuguese language attack exploited a vulnerability in Orkut’s scrapbook feature to post malicious JavaScript code on a user’s page. On viewing the scrapbook post, the code performed the exploit and downloaded a .js file to the user’s machine. The worm then took control of the user’s account, sending out copies of itself to all of the user’s friends and joining a group called ‘Infectados pelo Vírus do Orkut,’ which translates as ‘Infected by Orkut virus.’ The worm does not appear to download any other malicious programs. Security experts said yesterday that the malicious code has been removed from users’ pages and the worm has been taken offline. A Symantec researcher said that, although the attack was largely benevolent, it is worrisome because it was launched simply by loading the user’s Orkut profile. “This worm illustrates how a simple script injection exploit could affect a large social networking site,” he wrote in a company blog. “This worm could have been used for other malicious purposes, such as stealing cookies, exploiting other vulnerabilities or stealing sensitive data.”

Source: <http://www.vnunet.com/vnunet/news/2206181/orkut-worm-strikes-700>

36. *December 21, Computerworld* – (National) **Microsoft automates IE crash snafu workaround.** Microsoft Corp. posted an automated fix late yesterday for a week-old crippling problem with Internet Explorer, replacing a registry hack it had offered Wednesday. The new 476KB work-around can be downloaded manually from Microsoft’s Web site, and will be pushed to users via Windows Update as well, according to the company. “It has also been made available via Windows Update and

Automatic Update for all Internet Explorer 6 customers on Windows XP Service Pack 2,” said the IE program manager at Microsoft’s Security Response Center (MSRC), in an entry on the center’s blog yesterday. The work-around came more than a week after users installed Security Update MS07-069 on December 11, and immediately began reporting that they were unable to connect to the Internet with IE or that the browser kept crashing. MS07-069, one of seven bulletins issued that day, fixed four critical vulnerabilities in IE 5.01, IE6 and IE7. On Wednesday, Microsoft acknowledged the problem and posted work-around instructions that required users to edit the Windows registry, a chore beyond most users. Microsoft has also revised the pertinent support document, originally posted Wednesday, to note the availability of the automated work-around, and marked up the MS07-069 security bulletin of December 11 to warn users of the problem.

Source:

[http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9053940&source=rss\\_news50](http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9053940&source=rss_news50)

### Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at [soc@us-cert.gov](mailto:soc@us-cert.gov) or visit their Website: [www.us-cert.gov](http://www.us-cert.gov).

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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## Communications Sector

Nothing to report.

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## Commercial Facilities Sector

37. *December 21, Deseret Morning News* – (Utah) **Trolley evacuated after bomb scare.** The Trolley Square shopping center was evacuated about 9 p.m. Thursday after a cell phone caller told Salt Lake police dispatchers a bomb had been planted in the area. The caller spoke of Jihad and furthering a holy war, said a Salt Lake police official. Mall authorities closed and evacuated the shopping center, and police asked shop owners to search their shops. Police also searched common areas for unusual circumstances. By 10 p.m., no bomb had been found and there had been no explosion. Shop owners were allowed back into the mall to properly close down their stores. Meanwhile, police tracked the cell phone number from which the bomb threat came. Officers believe the call originated near Liberty Park.

Source: <http://deseretnews.com/article/1,5143,695237939,00.html>

38. *December 20, Lufkin Daily News* – (Texas) **About 1,200 homes, businesses still without power after overnight storm.** A storm that hit Angelina County, Texas,

overnight Wednesday yielded nickel-sized hail and winds gusting up to 60 mph that left debris across several neighborhoods and caused more than 2,000 homes to lose electricity. As of Thursday afternoon, 1,200 homes and businesses remained without power county-wide, most of those located in Zavalla.

Source:

[http://www.lufkindailynews.com/news/content/news/stories/2007/12/21/Overnight\\_story.html](http://www.lufkindailynews.com/news/content/news/stories/2007/12/21/Overnight_story.html)

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## **National Monuments & Icons Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## **Dams Sector**

39. *December 22, WTEN 10 Albany* – (New York) **Rain could be trouble for those near the Gilboa Dam.** Rain and warmer temperatures are causes of concern for people living around the Gilboa Dam in New York. Currently, the dam's siphons are flowing, moving water 550-cubic feet per second, which will keep the water level low. However, rain and snow-runoff could change that. Concern for rain Saturday night into Sunday has prompted residents to keep a close eye over the siphons at the Gilboa Dam that keep the water moving. The siphons work to keep the flow of water continuous and its levels down. With water dropping by several feet in just the past three days, it seems to be working. Last year, the siphons froze and took a month to thaw out. This year, officials say freezing will be avoided. If not, ice jams can release and cause flooding in the weeks to come.

Source: <http://www.wten.com/Global/story.asp?S=7535625>

40. *December 21, Times-Picayune* – (Louisiana) **Levee board hears from corps critic.** A University of California, Berkeley professor told the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East that, in his opinion, the federal government's plan to provide a 100-year level of protection from storm surges would likely fall short by half. It now falls to the authority to figure out how best to evaluate the data from the professor that conflicts with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' position that the system will provide 100-year protection by 2011. Levee commissioners stressed that they neither accept nor reject the professor's claims out of hand, but feel obligated to investigate and hopefully reconcile any significant differences. After the meeting, the commander of the Corps' Hurricane Protection Office said that the professor's positions would not be ignored. "For me, this is the first I've seen of this information, and we've got to put it into the hands of engineers and scientists," he said. The professor listed alleged problems, from too-thin safety margins and too-short floodwall pilings to flawed assumptions being fed by a Corps-led task force to the sophisticated computer models used to predict risk.

Source: <http://www.nola.com/news/t-p/frontpage/index.ssf?/base/news-5/119821860746110.xml&coll=1>

41. *December 21, Sacramento Bee* – (California) **Residents file suit over levee project.** In California, a coalition of Garden Highway residents filed suit Wednesday against Sacramento’s flood control agency, alleging a massive levee project planned in the city’s Natomas basin fails to address a host of potential environmental problems. The project would raise and widen nearly 25 miles of levees bordering the Natomas basin to satisfy federal flood control officials. The Garden Highway group, which represents about 100 homeowners, fears harmful consequences from the project, including damage to their homes and drinking water wells. In addition, the rules of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could take a hard line on so-called levee “encroachments.” This includes the Garden Highway homes themselves, which the corps may view as a threat to levee stability and access. The proposed project involves a new “adjacent” levee that would widen the existing levee structure by as much as 300 feet on the inland side. This would shift the regulated levee profile away from the Garden Highway homes so they are no longer viewed as encroachments. This design minimizes construction impacts to Garden Highway residents. The Garden Highway group wants the court to impose a restraining order and require new environmental studies.

Source: <http://www.sacbee.com/101/story/584036.html>

42. *December 21, Republican Eagle* – (California) **New problems surfacing at Byllesby Dam.** Staff in Cannon Falls, Minnesota, recently learned the Byllesby Dam may need major upgrades to meet federal requirements. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has several structural issues with the dam, the Public Works director said. FERC officials have apparently requested that the dam be built to handle twice the amount of water it took on during the historic 1965 flood. “The odds of it happening — we equate it to the 10,000-year flood,” the director said. Officials also recently learned the dam’s emergency warning siren may not be functioning properly. Dakota County has located a dam expert to check some of the dam’s settings and to perform an overall check to make sure it is operating properly. Commissioners will meet next week with members of FERC to discuss the county’s options regarding recent developments.

Source: <http://www.republican-eagle.com/articles/index.cfm?id=46526&section=News>

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To report physical infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center at [nicc@dhs.gov](mailto:nicc@dhs.gov) or (202) 282–9201.

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US–CERT at [soc@us-cert.gov](mailto:soc@us-cert.gov) or visit their Web page at [www.us-cert.gov](http://www.us-cert.gov).

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