



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 19 December 2008

Current Nationwide Threat Level is

ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)
<http://www.dhs.gov/>

- The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on Wednesday approved a rule that enhances security requirements for nuclear power reactors. (See item [4](#))
- According to the Associated Press, a doctoral student at Lamar University in Texas was charged with making a terroristic threat after allegedly sending an e-mail threatening to violently disrupt Saturday's commencement ceremony because he was upset about not graduating. (See item [24](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical](#); [Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#); [Dams](#)

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Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture and Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health and Healthcare](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: **Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED**

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *December 18, River Reporter* – (Pennsylvania) **Gas pipeline company explains explosion.** The Columbia Gas Transmission Company sent a letter on December 4 responding to the Pike County Commissioners' concern over the gas pipeline explosion that occurred on November 5 near the intersection of I-84 and Route Six outside of Milford, Pennsylvania. The explosion occurred as the company was increasing the pressure on the pipeline under testing protocols. The gas line was immediately closed down. No one was injured, but the explosion occurred within the very sensitive Sawkill Watershed, tearing up some of the topography of the site. To avoid any future explosions, the company will resume operations at the pressure approved prior to testing only gradually. The investigation is being conducted in conjunction with the U.S.

Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, the Pike County Conservation District, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Source: <http://www.riverreporter.com/issues/08-12-18/news-pipeline.html>

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Chemical Industry Sector

2. *December 18, Winona Daily News* – (Minnesota) **Derailment causes liquid nitrogen leak; no chemicals reach river, officials say.** An environmental crisis was averted Wednesday when no chemicals spilled into the Mississippi River after a two-train collision near Dresbach, Minnesota, officials said. At least one of the 23 overturned cars spilled an unknown amount of low-concentration liquid nitrogen, and one train's diesel-powered locomotive engine plunged into the water. Chemical spill crews trapped the fertilizer by plugging a culvert about 50 yards from the river, and the locomotive was found not to have leaked any fuel, said the deputy director of Winona County Emergency Management. A spokeswoman for the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said it is reviewing cargo manifests from both trains to ensure neither carried "high-hazard threats." The agency is leaving the investigation into the fertilizer spill to local departments, who are briefing a state EPA representative.

Source: <http://www.winonadailynews.com/articles/2008/12/18/news/02cleanup.txt>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

3. *December 18, Associated Press* – (Vermont) **Downed NH power line blamed for Vermont Yankee power cut.** Officials at the Vermont Yankee nuclear plant say it was a downed power line during last week's ice storm in New Hampshire that prompted a power reduction at the Vernon, Vermont, reactor. The plant was reduced to 82 percent of its normal power output at the request of the regional power dispatch agency, ISO-New England, so that the power grid could more easily handle its output. Officials say that move followed the loss of a power line in New Hampshire. The plant was back at full power by Sunday evening. Meanwhile, the storm on December 12 caused some telecommunications problems at the plant's information and emergency operations facilities. But plant officials say backup systems were found to be working properly.

Source:

http://news.bostonherald.com/news/national/northeast/view/2008_12_18_Downed_N_H_power_line_blated_for_Vermont_Yankee_power_cut/srv=home&position=recent

4. *December 17, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission* – (National) **NRC approves final rule expanding security requirements for nuclear power plants.** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on Wednesday approved a rule that enhances security requirements for nuclear power reactors. Many of the requirements of this rule are similar to those previously imposed by orders issued after the September 11th attacks. Significant features in this rule include a safety/security interface section that requires

plants to manage plant activities to avoid potential adverse interactions between security activities and other plant activities. Additionally, there are new sections requiring a comprehensive cyber security program at nuclear power plants, and a requirement that plants develop strategies and response procedures to address an aircraft threat or loss of large areas of the facility due to explosions and fire. New training and qualification requirements for security personnel are also included. The new rule incorporates portions of a petition for rulemaking to require licensees to evaluate whether proposed changes, tests, or experiments cause protection against radiological sabotage to be decreased and, if so, to conduct such actions only with NRC approval. A second petition asked the NRC to require licensees to post at least one armed guard at each entrance to “owner controlled areas.” The final physical security requirements in the new rule give licensees flexibility to determine if such personnel postings are necessary.

Source: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2008/08-227.html>

5. *December 17, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission* – (North Carolina) **NRC approves license renewal for Shearon Harris nuclear power plant for an additional 20 years.** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has approved the operating license renewal of the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 1, in North Carolina for an additional 20 years. The operator, Progress Energy, submitted an application for renewal of the license November 16, 2006. Their current license would have expired on October 24, 2026. With the renewal, the license is extended until October 24, 2046. The NRC’s environmental review for this license renewal concluded there were no environmental impacts that would preclude renewal of the license for environmental reasons. After reviewing the plant’s safety systems and specifications, the staff concluded that there were no safety concerns that would preclude license renewal, because the applicant had effectively demonstrated the capability to manage the effects of plant aging.

Source: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/news/2008/08-226.html>

6. *December 17, New York Times* – (National) **French utility to acquire part of U.S. nuclear giant.** The French national utility will acquire a 49.9 percent stake in a major American nuclear operator in a new push into the American power industry which is the source of much of French nuclear technology. The EDF Group, which includes Electricite de France, will buy the stake in the nuclear operations of Constellation Energy, the parent company of Baltimore Gas and Electric, for \$4.5 billion. The joint venture is called UniStar. Constellation owns Calvert Cliffs 1 and 2 in Maryland, south of Washington, and three plants in upstate New York, Nine Mile Point 1 and 2 in Scriba, and Robert E. Ginna in Ontario, near Rochester. It is seeking to build reactors at the Calvert Cliffs site and in Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Companies in those states would take ownership shares, but UniStar would build and operate the reactors.

Source:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/18/business/worldbusiness/18nuke.html?_r=1&ref=worldbusiness

7. *December 16, Reuters* – (Arizona) **APS Ariz. Palo Verde 2 reactor exits outage.** Arizona Public Service’s Unit 2 at the Palo Verde nuclear power station in Arizona

exited an outage and ramped up to 68 percent power by early Tuesday, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission said in a report. The unit shut by November 22 to fix a hydrogen leak in the cooling system for the main electrical generator.

Source: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/oilRpt/idUKN1654654920081216>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

Nothing to report

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Banking and Finance Sector

8. *December 18, WDTV 5 Bridgeport* – (West Virginia) **Bank scam targets texters.** A new bank scam in West Virginia is targeting cell phone users. One customer of First Community Bank recently fell victim to the scam. The customer says she had recently activated a new debit card when she received a message on her cell phone that said the bank card had been deactivated and she would need to call a phone number to reactivate it. The customer called the number and entered personal information including the account number and debit card password as she was instructed. A few days later her bank account was wiped out. The customer says she is one of several customers of First Community Bank to be targeted by the scam. Calls made to several local banks indicate that the text messages are popping up all over the state. Belington-based Freedom Bank has also heard reports of a similar scam from its customers.

Source: <http://www.wdtv.com/news/local/36358619.html>

9. *December 17, New York Times* – (International) **Computer failure closes Toronto Exchange.** Canada's largest exchange, and one of the world's leading mining exchanges, shut down 18 minutes after opening when it became apparent that only some customers were receiving data about trading. Both the main exchange and the venture exchange for junior listings were closed. While the effective loss of an entire trading session was extraordinary, it is one of a series of technical problems that have plagued the exchange, which converted to all-electronic trading 11 years ago. Several analysts believe that the problems may benefit several alternative exchanges that have appeared over the last year to challenge the 147-year-old Toronto exchange. Late in the afternoon, the exchange, which is owned by the TMX Group, abandoned all hope of reopening. Later it issued a statement promising that the exchange would open on December 18 for regular trading. The exchange did not identify the cause of the problem, at least publicly. But in a series of brief statements, it made it clear that the computers that actually handle trading were not involved. Instead the problem was in a separate system that delivers data about trades to brokers and news organizations.

Source:

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/18/business/18tse.html?_r=1&partner=rss&emc=rss&pagewanted=all

10. *December 16, The Register* – (National) **American Express web bug exposes card holders.** A vulnerability on the American Express website has unnecessarily put visitors at risk for more than two weeks and violates industry regulations governing credit card companies, a security researcher says. Among other things, the cross-site scripting (XSS) error on americanexpress.com allows attackers to steal users' authentication cookies, which are used to validate American Express customers after they enter their login credentials. Depending on how the website is designed, miscreants could use the cookies to access customer account sections, said a spokesman of the Holistic Security blog. The spokesman posted the information about American Express after spending more than two weeks trying in vain to get someone inside the company to fix the problem.

Source: http://www.theregister.co.uk/2008/12/16/american_express_website_bug/

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Transportation Sector

11. *December 18, Las Vegas Sun* – (Nevada) **RTC to test wireless traffic system in Green Valley.** A new wireless traffic signal management system that will soon be tested in Henderson could change the way traffic flow is managed in the Las Vegas Valley — and save local governments millions in the process. Henderson is preparing to install the system on Pecos Road at traffic signals from Pebble Road to Sunset Road. The premise is simple: use wireless networks to coordinate and manage traffic signals and remove the need for costly underground fiber optic cable systems. The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is putting up about \$86,000 to test the equipment on Pecos. The RTC operates the Freeways and Arterial System of Transportation, or FAST, which is a traffic management system that links signals and dynamic signs throughout the valley in an effort to control and improve traffic flow. While the wireless system seems preferable in many regards, engineers still are not sure whether it will work in a system as complex as FAST. There are concerns about whether the wireless signals can handle the vast amounts of information that must be exchanged in a traffic management system, which is why fiber optic cables are used in the first place. The city hopes to begin installing the equipment in January, and it could have a sense of whether the system will work as early as next summer.

Source: <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2008/dec/18/rtc-test-wireless-traffic-system-green-valley/>

12. *December 17, WTHR 13 Indianapolis* – (Indiana) **Plane slides off taxiway at Indianapolis International.** Icy conditions caused problems on the roadway and the runway Wednesday morning. A plane diverted from Chicago to Indianapolis because of winter weather ran into weather problems in Indianapolis when it slid off the icy taxiway. The Delta plane slid onto a grassy area. Passengers told Eyewitness News the plane had just landed safely but hit a bump in the road. “We were turning to get onto the taxiway and the plane slid into some black ice right into the grass,” said one passenger. The 117 passengers and five crew members were fine, and no one was injured. That Delta Airlines MD-88 remains at Indianapolis International. Crews are trying to determine if any damage was caused to the aircraft.

Source: <http://www.wthr.com/Global/story.asp?S=9535716>

13. *December 17, Newsday* – (New Jersey) **Newark airport first hub to test satellite system.** Newark Liberty International Airport will be the first major airport to test new technology aimed at reducing chronic flight delays. The Ground Based Augmentation System uses global positioning data instead of radar to pinpoint aircraft positions. Officials hope it will reduce congestion at the airport by allowing planes to fly closer together without compromising safety. The system, made by Honeywell, will cost the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey about \$2.5 million.
Source: <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/newjersey/ny-bc-nj--newarkairport-gps1217dec17,0,79469.story>

14. *December 17, Associated Press* – (International) **Chinese cargo ship rescued from pirates.** An international anti-piracy force thwarted the attempted takeover of a Chinese cargo ship off the Somali coast on Wednesday, sending in attack helicopters that fired on the bandits and forced them to flee after they had boarded the ship. In another blow to the region's thriving piracy trade, the Indian navy handed over 23 pirates it caught at sea to authorities in Yemen. In Wednesday's assault, nine pirates armed with guns overtook the Chinese ship with speedboats and boarded the vessel, said the head of the International Maritime Bureau's piracy reporting center. He said the 30-member crew sent a distress message to the bureau as it saw the pirates approaching, then barricaded themselves inside their living quarters. He said the bureau quickly alerted the international naval force, which dispatched two helicopters and a warship. "Two helicopters arrived at the scene first and helped deter the hijacking. They fired at the pirates, forcing them to flee the ship," he said. There were no injuries during the five-hour ordeal. Somali pirates, spurred by widespread poverty in their homeland, have hijacked more than 40 vessels off their country's coastline this year.
Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28281953/>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

15. *December 18, Federal Bureau of Investigation* – (National) **FBI addresses unrelated suspicious mailings received this week.** There have been two issues covered by the press this week concerning suspicious letters. These matters are not related. The first issue involves letters mailed from Texas to more than 40 different governors' offices around the country and numerous U.S. Embassies overseas. Each of these envelopes contained a similar typewritten letter and a white powder substance. The powder was field tested at the site and then forwarded to a regional laboratory for further testing. To date, the testing on the powder has proven negative for any harmful substance. It will eventually be sent to the FBI Laboratory as evidence in the case. Even though the substance is harmless, this matter is still a federal crime and is being investigated by the FBI's Dallas Division and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. In a second, unrelated matter, several U.S. military facilities throughout the country have received envelopes containing a computer disk and other material. There has been no powder substance in these mailings to date. As part of the FBI's WMD protocol, agents in each field office

interact with countless people in their communities to provide training on how to recognize suspicious mail and the proper notification procedures. In several instances involving the letters to the military bases, the FBI responded, examined the envelope, and determined there was no federal crime. The FBI does not investigate individuals who write letters expressing their opinions. As this action is protected under the First Amendment, the FBI is not investigating this matter.

Source: <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel08/suspiciouspackages121808.htm>

16. *December 18, WSIL 3 Harrisburg* – (Illinois) **Marion Hospital gets suspicious package.** A suspicious envelope created a hazmat situation at the Marion V-A Hospital. A mail room employee discovered the envelope Wednesday morning. The Marion Fire Department’s hazmat team was called in to retrieve the package and decontaminate the area. The envelope was not opened, and employees in the area were decontaminated. After the mail room and envelope were sealed off, investigators determined the source of the white powder. It turns out someone sent a Christmas card with a candy cane inside. By the time it arrived at the V-A, the candy was crushed and the small grains were coming through the envelope.

Source: http://www.wsiltv.com/p/news_details.php?newsID=6413&type=local

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Agriculture and Food Sector

17. *December 18, Food Production Daily* – (International) **Guide aims to help RTE foodmakers reduce listeria risk.** New guidelines can assist ready-to-eat (RTE) food producers in identifying the *Listeria monocytogenes* risk in their products as well as informing decisions on when and which shelf-life studies are needed. The International Life Science Institute states that foods considered as high-risk sources of listeriosis include products that are ready-to-eat, require refrigeration, and are stored for extended time periods. A recent U.S. study has found that the combination of natural antimicrobials with in-package pasteurization of RTE turkey bologna is effective in reducing the *L. monocytogenes* pathogen and preventing outgrowth during refrigerated storage. In-package pasteurization allied with nisin-lysozyme treatments was effective in reducing the bacterial population by below detectable levels by two-three weeks of storage, claim the Clemson University researchers. The researchers claim that the intervention methods used in the study satisfy the requirements of alternative 1 of the interim final rule of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in regard to its regulation aimed at controlling *L. monocytogenes* in plants that produce RTE meat and poultry. “This fact would help the industry in developing a cost-effective pasteurization method to control *L. monocytogenes* in RTE meat products and to preserve the desirable qualities of the food product,” added the research team.

Source: <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/Quality-Safety/Guide-aims-to-help-RTE-foodmakers-reduce-listeria-risk>

18. *December 17, Food Production Daily* – (National) **U.S. report urges better foodborne disease monitoring.** A new U.S. report concludes that major gaps remain in many critical areas of preparedness for health emergencies, including foodborne disease

reporting. Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) have released the sixth annual "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism" report. This edition of the report found that 20 states did not meet or exceed the national U.S. average rate for being able to identify the pathogens responsible for foodborne disease outbreaks in their states, and it references some of the more serious 2008 U.S. health emergencies including the salmonella outbreak in jalapeno and Serrano peppers that sickened 1,442 people in 43 states and the largest beef recall in U.S. history in February. "Monitoring the public's food supply is a real world example of public health preparedness as it requires the same skills and technologies needed to detect and mitigate bioterrorism and infectious disease outbreaks," states the report.

Source: <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/Quality-Safety/US-report-urges-better-foodborne-disease-monitoring/?c=DtqJR18k3Pm3LVK7u6KHow%3D%3D>

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Water Sector

19. *December 18, Ventura County Star* – (California) **Chlorinated wastewater discharged into river.** About 150,000 gallons of treated wastewater was discharged into the Santa Clara River early this week without having the chlorine that is used to disinfect it removed. The problem occurred at the Santa Paula sewer plant Monday and Tuesday because low temperatures caused a dechlorination line to freeze, Ventura County health officials said Wednesday. The line has been flushed and returned to operation, officials said. The city is building a treatment facility to replace the World War II-era plant where the problem occurred.

Source: <http://www.venturacountystar.com/news/2008/dec/18/chlorinated-wastewater-discharged-into-river/>

20. *December 17, Daily Times* – (Maryland) **Board of public works approves \$14 million to protect environment, water quality.** The Maryland Board of Public Works approved over \$10 million in Bay Restoration Funds to upgrade a wastewater treatment plant and limit nutrient pollution in Maryland waterways. Additional grants totaling over \$3.8 million will upgrade combined sewer overflows, connect failing septic systems to wastewater treatment plants, and improve sewer and storm water systems to reduce bacteria and nutrient pollution, while grants to improve drinking water supplies will protect public health. Today's \$86,450 grant increase, in addition to a previous grant of \$300,000, will relocate Crisfield's Cove Street pumping station force main to eliminate raw wastewater overflows. The proposed relocation of the force main is to alleviate such overflows during the rainy season. A \$650,000 grant given today will improve Pittsville Drinking Water Plant's ability to meet its current needs and fund a feasibility study. Currently, the plant has operational issues related to high iron in the town's wells and problems with clarifier performance during periods of peak demand. Once improvements are complete, the plant will be able to provide an adequate and safe drinking water supply to residents. The planning study will include engineering evaluation of various alternatives and technologies to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective alternative required to meet the area's drinking water needs.

Source: <http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20081217/NEWS01/81217023/-1/ESN>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

21. *December 17, Boston Globe* – (National) **Emergency medicine specialists in short supply.** Writing in the journal *Academic Emergency Medicine*, a researcher from Massachusetts General Hospital estimated that it would take until 2019 to find enough fully-trained, board-certified emergency physicians to work in the 4,828 emergency departments that are open 24 hours a day. And that best-case projection assumes that no current doctors who meet those qualifications die or leave their jobs. The Institute of Medicine said in 2006 that ERs should ideally be staffed by doctors who had spent their residency training in emergency medicine and had later passed tests to become certified in the specialty. But only about 55 percent of doctors working in ERs meet that standard, researchers wrote.

Source: http://www.boston.com/news/health/blog/2008/12/emergency_medic.html

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Government Facilities Sector

22. *December 18, Expatica* – (International) **Fourth man charged in plot against U.S. targets in Germany.** German federal prosecutors charged a fourth man in a major plot to attack U.S. citizens in Germany uncovered in 2007. The 23-year-old German was extradited from Turkey last month after being arrested there in November 2007 on charges of membership of a terrorist organization and preparation of a bombing. Investigators believe he procured 26 detonators recovered in September 2007 with drums of hydrogen peroxide, the substance used in the deadly 2005 attacks on London's transport system, the statement said. Three men arrested at the time and charged three months ago are suspected of planning to use the chemicals to attack installations such as U.S. military bases in Germany and sites popular with U.S. citizens.

Source: http://www.expatica.com/de/news/local_news/Fourth-man-charged-in-plot-against-US-targets-in-Germany--.html

23. *December 18, Beaufort Gazette* – (National) **Beaufort Hornets face inspection again.** Hornet squadrons at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina, are waiting to find out if the Marine Corps will require them to again inspect their F/A-18s, this time in the wake of last week's crash in San Diego. Ongoing investigations into the crash that killed three people near MCAS Miramar last week will determine whether the Corps mandates immediate safety inspections of all 635 of its fighter jets, said a major who is the Corps spokesman at Headquarters Marine Corps. If the jets are examined again, it would be the second such inspection in the past three months.

Source: <http://www.military.com/news/article/beaufort-hornets-face-inspection-again.html?col=1186032310810&ESRC=topstories.RSS>

24. *December 18, Associated Press* – (Texas) **Lamar student accused of terror threat.** A

Lamar University doctoral student was charged with making a terroristic threat after allegedly sending an e-mail threatening to violently disrupt Saturday's commencement ceremony because he was upset about not graduating. The student was arraigned Thursday on the third-degree felony charge, a Beaumont Police officer said. Investigators said the student denied any involvement in the anonymous e-mail sent to the school's president and said secretaries in the graduate office were trying to victimize him. The e-mail threatened to place people "in fear of serious bodily injury," according to the state's probable cause affidavit. U.S. Marshals on Thursday took the student to a federal courthouse where he now faces arraignment on federal charges that the threat was made using a communication system that crossed state lines. The student was denied graduation because he missed a deadline on his dissertation, said Lamar's senior associate provost for academic affairs.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/ap/tx/6171104.html>

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Emergency Services Sector

25. *December 16, NextGov.com* – (National) **Agencies must cooperate on joint radio system.** Congress should require the Justice, Homeland Security, and Treasury departments to develop a nationwide joint radio communications system to coordinate responses to emergencies such as a terrorist attack, according to a Government Accountability Office report released on December 12. The Integrated Wireless Network, first conceived in 2001 after the September 11th attacks, is envisioned to allow law enforcement and disaster response agencies to communicate in the aftermath of a natural disaster or domestic terrorist attack. But instead of working together to create a secure, interoperable network, each of the departments is working independently to modernize its own communications system, which are not interoperable, according to the GAO report.
Source: http://www.nextgov.com/nextgov/ng_20081216_4856.php
26. *December 16, U.S. Department of Homeland Security* – (National) **DHS announces \$34 million in FY 2009 emergency operations center grants.** The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Tuesday opened the application period for approximately \$34 million under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) Grant Program. These grants are intended to improve state, local, and tribal emergency management and preparedness capabilities by supporting flexible, sustainable, secure, and interoperable Emergency Operations Centers. EOCs may request up to \$1 million for construction projects or up to \$250,000 for renovation projects through the FY 2009 EOC Grant Program. The program also requires a federal match of 75 percent and a 25 percent grantee cost-share cash or in-kind match for FY 2009.
Source: <http://www.emsresponder.com/features/article.jsp?id=8672&siteSection=24>

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Information Technology

27. *December 18, SC Magazine* – (International) **Microsoft releases emergency patch for Internet Explorer.** Microsoft has released the emergency security update MS08-078 to patch Internet Explorer. The director of the Microsoft Resource Centre claimed that they had verified that this update meets the quality, deployment, and application compatibility criteria. He described it as a high-quality update that is ready for broad release, and he encouraged customers to test and deploy it as quickly as possible. In a blog posting, he acknowledged claims that the update may be misleading, as it is over 300 distinct updates for over six versions of Internet Explorer that apply to over 50 different languages. He said that despite the huge number of distinct updates, they are all being offered to customers automatically, regardless of their specific Internet Explorer configuration.
Source: <http://www.scmagazineuk.com/Microsoft-releases-emergency-patch-for-Internet-Explorer/article/123056/>
28. *December 18, Computerworld* – (International) **Oops! Mozilla forgets Firefox 2 patch, must re-issue update.** A “clerical error” by Mozilla omitted one of the security patches that was supposed to be included in the Windows version of December 16’s Firefox 2.0 .0.19 release, a company executive said. “We don’t believe users are at risk right now,” said the director of Firefox. He declined to pinpoint the missing patch — one of ten that were to be included in the update — to make it more difficult for attackers to take advantage of the snafu. “I can tell you that it’s not one of the severe vulnerabilities and there are no known exploits for it,” he said.
Source:
http://www.infoworld.com/article/08/12/18/Oops_Mozilla_forgets_Firefox_2_patch_must_reissue_update_1.html?source=rss&url=http://www.infoworld.com/article/08/12/18/Oops_Mozilla_forgets_Firefox_2_patch_must_reissue_update_1.html
29. *December 16, Softpedia* – (International) **Four critical Facebook XSS flaws discovered.** The XSSed project made public four different cross-site scripting vulnerabilities discovered by individual security researchers. The flaws affect the developers, applications, user registration, and iPhone login pages. One of the project’s founders describes these newly discovered Facebook bugs as being highly critical, because they can be exploited “to infect millions of Facebook members with malware, adware and spyware.” His estimation is warranted by the fact that, according to Alexa, Facebook currently has a global page traffic rank of five, and on average is reached daily by over 12.5 percent of the total number of Internet users. In addition, according to the researchers, three out of four different pages found to be vulnerable were already compromised. The developers.facebook.com page is the only one not listed as XSSed in the project’s archive. Even though at the time of writing this article the vulnerabilities were not tagged as fixed by the XSSed project, it is very likely that the Facebook staff will deal with them quickly. “Facebook staff usually fixes such flaws promptly,” the founder points out.
Source: <http://news.softpedia.com/news/Four-Critical-Facebook-XSS-Flaws-Discovered-100171.shtml>

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <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

30. *December 16, Ars Technica* – (National) **AT&T, T-Mobile settle over voicemail security advertising.** AT&T and T-Mobile have agreed to pay fines to the Los Angeles District Attorney over claims they made that their voicemail systems were secure from hackers that turned out to be untrue. As part of a permanent injunction issued against the two companies last week, AT&T will pay \$59,300 while T-Mobile will pay \$25,000, and they have also agreed to stop advertising their systems as secure. “Our investigators found that cellular providers who claimed their systems were safe from such sabotage were wrong,” the district attorney said in a statement. “Cell phones purchased by undercover investigators were easily hacked into, enabling the voicemail to be changed at will by use of the spoofing system.” He said that, during a year-long investigation into AT&T and T-Mobile, investigators used TelTech Systems’ SpoofCard to spoof the numbers they were calling from in order to gain unauthorized access to various AT&T and T-Mobile accounts. “Hacking into voicemail allowed messages to be changed or erased,” he added. “Important information could be removed from the voicemail and phony information could be inserted.”
Source: <http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20081216-att-t-mobile-settle-over-voicemail-security-advertising.html>

31. *December 16, CNN* – (District of Columbia) **Expect logjam of cell phone calls at Obama inauguration.** Hundreds of thousands of Americans are planning to converge on the National Mall on January 20 for the Presidential inauguration. The cellular phone systems around the National Mall will be overloaded if the expected record crowds show up, according to a spokesman for CTIA — The Wireless Association, a nonprofit organization that represents wireless carriers. Sprint and Verizon are two wireless carriers in the D.C.-metro area spending millions of dollars to add capacity to their cell sites ahead of the inauguration. To handle the increased traffic, Sprint is planning to deploy resources usually reserved for hurricanes: COWs and COLTs. The acronyms stand for Cell On Wheels and Cell On Light Truck. The vehicles use satellite and microwave technology and act as mobile cell towers. They are typically deployed to disaster sites when towers get knocked out. For the inauguration, Sprint says it will increase calling capacity. A COLT will be able to handle about 1,500 extra callers, though only 60 calls can go through simultaneously. On Tuesday, Sprint technicians added 30 percent more capacity to one site on top of the World Health Organization building in downtown Washington. A major security concern for the event is the crush of first responders, dignitaries, and police who depend on their mobile phones. First responders will have a priority access code enabling them to get their calls through.
Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/12/16/inauguration.phones/index.html>

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Commercial Facilities Sector

32. *December 17, KNXV 15 Phoenix* – (Arizona) **Suspicious package causes evacuation of north Phoenix bank.** Phoenix police and firefighters are investigating a suspicious package that caused the evacuation of a north Phoenix bank Wednesday evening. The packaged box was found at about 6 p.m. at the Chase bank located at Tatum Boulevard and Cactus Road. The Phoenix Fire Department Bomb Squad used a bomb detecting robot to investigate the package after the bank was evacuated and the surrounding area was sealed off.

Source: <http://www.abc15.com/content/news/phoenixmetro/story/Suspicious-package-causes-evacuation-of-north/gmAoGQyQ4keUb4ZkQ-J5IA.csp>

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

33. *December 17, McClatchy Newspapers* – (Utah) **Utah leases could be early issue for new Interior chief.** Environmental groups filed a lawsuit Wednesday to try to block the sale of oil and gas leases that the Presidential Administration plans for Friday on 110,000 acres of wide-open redrock country in Utah near Arches and Canyonlands national parks. The suit argues that oil and gas development would make the air dirtier in the two national parks and Dinosaur National Monument, and also would harm Nine Mile Canyon, which contains archaeological sites and prehistoric rock art. If the sale goes through as planned, a decision about whether the government should buy back the leases could hit the desk of the U.S. President-elect's choice as Secretary of the Interior. A spokeswoman said that the National Park Service raised concerns about leases on 93 parcels, and that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) took 23 of them off Friday's offering as a result. She said the BLM satisfied the Park Service with stipulations about use of the other 70 parcels.

Source: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/251/story/58058.html>

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Dams Sector

34. *December 17, Houma Today* – (Louisiana) **EPA and Corps demand Chackbay lose levee.** Residents of this north Lafourche community are trying to figure out their response to a Federal Government proposal that a mile-long stretch of protective levee be knocked down to protect wetlands. The Lafourche Parish President told about two dozen residents during a meeting in the Chackbay Volunteer Fire Station Monday that the two organizations have refused to budge in a four-year battle to retain the levee. They have given residents two choices, tear it down and leave nothing or replace it with another levee farther from wetlands and closer to their homes. But if moved to the location the Environmental Protection Agency and Corps have demanded, the levee would slice across some residents' land. A decision on the matter must likely come

sometime early next year, officials said. Although the Corps originally accepted the levee's construction in 2001, parish officials say their predecessors did not apply for after-the-fact certification necessary to retain the levee, which the Corps would have granted. By neglecting to do so, parish officials said the Corps deemed the levee a hazard to area wetlands in 2004 and, if left standing, will fine the parish up to \$27,000 for every day it has stood since 2001. That would total more than \$65 million if the Corps imposed the maximum fine.

Source:

http://www.houmatoday.com/article/20081217/ARTICLES/812179919/1211/NEWS01?Title=EPA_and_corps_demand_Chackbay_lose_levee

35. *December 17, Daily Comet* – (Louisiana) **Environmental impact of Dulac levee improvements are outlined in report.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Terrebonne Parish government inked a deal Monday to complete \$30 million worth of flood-protection levees in Dulac by June 1, the start of the 2009 hurricane season. Work is scheduled to begin in February. The 6-mile stretch will be 9 1/2 feet tall when finished. It will follow the Suzie Canal and Orange Street levees already in existence.

Source:

http://www.dailycomet.com/article/20081217/ARTICLES/812179914?Title=Environmental_impact_of_Dulac_levee_improvements_are_outlined_in_report

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