



# Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 05 December 2006

Current  
Nationwide  
Threat Level is

**ELEVATED**  
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF  
TERRORIST ATTACKS

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

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## Daily Highlights

- Reuters reports power outages from last week's snowstorm continue to cause hardships for hundreds of thousands of people in the Midwest, with deaths from bitter cold, falls in darkened homes, and poisonous fumes from makeshift fires increasing in Illinois and Missouri. (See item [3](#))
- The Star-Ledger reports a serious E. coli outbreak in central New Jersey has led to 11 confirmed cases and at least six suspected cases over the past two weeks; investigators have yet to determine the source of the outbreak. (See item [18](#))
- Royal Caribbean Cruise Line reports the world's largest cruise ship, Freedom of the Seas, returned to Miami on Sunday, December 3, with more than 380 passengers and crew sickened by what was believed to be the norovirus. (See item [23](#))

### DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report *Fast Jump*

**Production Industries:** [Energy](#); [Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

**Service Industries:** [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation and Border Security](#); [Postal and Shipping](#)

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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 04, Associated Press* — **China seeks direct talks with OPEC.** China wants to start direct negotiations with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to secure a stable oil supply and an equitable share of the oil market, a top official said Monday,

December 4, in comments that underline the Chinese economy's rapidly growing energy needs. Zhai Jun, China's assistant minister of foreign affairs, told conference participants in Dubai that his country was trying to develop "a negotiating mechanism with OPEC." Soaring demand for oil in rapidly industrializing China has been blamed as one of the chief causes for oil prices that have spiraled higher over the past two years. The country, which Zhai said imports six percent of the crude traded globally, has been setting up strategic oil reserves and aggressively seeking new suppliers in Africa and South America to help diversify its crude supply. "China's influence is growing in the Arab world," he said. China imported 3.1 million barrels a day of crude oil in 2005, and consumed 6.9 million barrels a day, according to U.S. Energy Department data. China is the world's third largest importer, behind Japan and the United States.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/04/AR2006120400453.html>

2. *December 04, Renewable Energy Access* — **IRS distributes \$800 million to renewable energy projects.** The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recently allocated \$800 million in tax credit bonds to renewable and alternative energy projects across the country. More than 600 projects received Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREB), including 434 solar facilities, 112 wind facilities, 14 hydro power facilities and 13 open-loop biomass facilities. Overall, the IRS received applications from 40 different states requesting approximately \$2.6 billion in CREBs. Out of the 700-plus applications received before the April 26, 2006 deadline, 610 government and electrical cooperative projects — which ranged in scale from \$23,000 to \$80 million — were chosen to receive the tax credit bond. In essence, a CREB provides government and electric cooperatives with interest-free loans for financing qualified energy projects. Qualified projects that could apply for CREBs included solar and wind facilities, closed loop biomass facilities, open loop biomass facilities, geothermal facilities, small irrigation power facilities, landfill gas facilities, trash combustion facilities, refined coal production facilities and certain hydropower facilities.

Source: <http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/news/story;jsessionid=9CCC0C27E69221C3D17B66EFA456C57C?id=46714>

3. *December 04, Reuters* — **Thousands still without power in the Midwest after snowstorm.** Deaths from bitter cold, falls in darkened homes and poisonous fumes from makeshift fires mounted on Monday, December 4, in Illinois and Missouri as power outages created hardships for hundreds of thousands, authorities said. Ice-coated tree limbs broke off and brought down more power lines even as utility crews enlisted from 14 states helped restore electricity to tens of thousands of others. At the peak of the storm that struck the Midwest late on Thursday and Friday, more than half a million customers of Ameren Corp. had lost power. More than 300,000 Illinois and Missouri customers of Ameren were still without power on Monday the utility said. National Guard troops in both states checked on abandoned vehicles and on residents in unheated homes. Above-freezing temperatures were forecast for the region as early as Monday.
- Source: [http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=newsOne&storyID=2006-12-04T180116Z\\_01\\_N04370369\\_RTRUKOC\\_0\\_US-USA-SNO\\_WSTORM.xml&WTmodLoc=Home-C2-TopNews-newsOne-9](http://today.reuters.com/news/articlenews.aspx?type=newsOne&storyID=2006-12-04T180116Z_01_N04370369_RTRUKOC_0_US-USA-SNO_WSTORM.xml&WTmodLoc=Home-C2-TopNews-newsOne-9)

4. *December 03, U.S. Department of State* — **Need for energy security links U.S. and African nations, U.S. Secretary of Energy says.** The United States and the nations of Africa are linked

by the need to enhance their individual and collective energy security, U.S. Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman says. In a keynote address to the Corporate Council on Africa Oil and Gas Forum December 1 in Bethesda, MD, Bodman said energy consumption in the United States is estimated to increase by 24 percent by the year 2025, while the total energy consumption for Africa is projected to grow by more than 75 percent in the same time period. "Africa's nations and regions have different energy requirements and are in different stages of energy infrastructure development," he said, "but they all face the challenge of dramatically expanding infrastructure to meet huge increases in energy demand to fuel economic development." The United States is committed to a multilateral approach to energy security based on free trade and free markets, according to Bodman. In seeking to expand reliable, affordable energy supplies, countries must also keep in mind environmental protection, Bodman said. For the United States, that means the continued application of advanced technology and pollution-prevention techniques at every step of the process, from production to consumption," he said. Speech:

<http://www.energy.gov/news/4498.htm>

Source: <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=December&x=20061203184410uhygsep0.9799921>

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## **Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials Sector**

5. *December 04, Associated Press* — **Freight train leaves tracks in Illinois and leaks chemical, dozen taken to hospitals.** A Union Pacific freight train derailed near Christopher, IL, early Monday, December 4, spilling an unknown chemical and leading to the evacuation of more than 70 homes. Two locomotives and 21 cars of the 83-car train left the tracks around 2:35 a.m. CST. The train was headed to Chicago from Houston. About a dozen people were taken to hospitals for treatment of mild symptoms, including burning or irritation of the throat, eyes and nose. Three train cars were leaking. The cause of the derailment had not been determined, authorities said.

Source: [http://www.kcbs.com/topic/ap\\_news.php?story=AP/APTV/National/a/a/TrainDerailment\\_a\\_a\\_-----](http://www.kcbs.com/topic/ap_news.php?story=AP/APTV/National/a/a/TrainDerailment_a_a_-----)

6. *December 01, KOCO (OK)* — **Peanut company plant fire forces evacuations.** A fire at Golden Peanut Company in northeastern Anadarko, OK, forced the evacuations of businesses and about 250 homes in the area Friday afternoon, December 1. The fire was burning in all three floors of the building, which was formerly used as a peanut mill before the milling operation moved about two years ago. Authorities said in ordering the evacuation, they were concerned that farm pesticides possibly left from when peanuts were milled might still be toxic.

Source: <http://www.koco.com/news/10443011/detail.html>

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## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

7. *December 01, Federal Computer Week* — **Navy makes it official, clearing way for deployment of WLANs.** The Navy has issued a new policy on wireless local-area networks

(WLAN), clearing the way for widespread WLAN deployments at Navy and Marine Corps bases and on ships, Navy and industry officials said. The policy requires WLAN users to implement strong encryption and intrusion-detection systems. Capt. Robert Zalaskus, enterprise program manager at the Naval Network Warfare Command, said demand for WLANs is strong, particularly for shipboard applications. The WLAN policy covers the Navy and Marine Corps. Like the command's message, it mandates that WLANs conform to Federal Information Processing Standard 140-2, which requires encryption based on the Advanced Encryption Standard. The policy also requires Layer 2 Authentication.

Source: <http://www.fcw.com/article96979-12-01-06-Web>

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## **Banking and Finance Sector**

8. *December 04, Bloomberg* — **Bank of New York agrees to acquire Mellon Financial.** Bank of New York Co. agreed to buy Mellon Financial Corp. for about \$16.5 billion, creating the biggest custodian of assets for institutional investors almost a decade after Mellon rejected a hostile bid from the bank. The merger links New York's oldest bank, founded by Alexander Hamilton in 1784, with the institution that helped finance the steel industry in the 1900s. The combined company will safeguard \$16.6 trillion for institutions, topping JPMorgan Chase & Co. as the world's largest custody bank. It will manage \$1.1 trillion in invested assets and have revenue of about \$12 billion a year, the companies said.

Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=aPNGiBS3Ye1E&refer=home>

9. *December 04, BBC News* — **UN warns on passwords.** The number of passwords and logins Web users need makes it inevitable they will re-use phrases, warned the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Re-using these identifiers puts people at serious risk of falling victim to identity theft, said the ITU report. It called on regulators and businesses to find better ways for people to identify themselves to Websites. Net trends towards personalization and efforts by Websites to track users are leading users to maintain a growing list of the logins and passwords. But this comes with risks, warns the ITU report. "This may cause security breaches, and leave them vulnerable to the machinations of identity thieves ever increasing in number and inventiveness," said the report. The UN agency urged net firms, businesses and government bodies to create better or more unified ways for people to use Websites that would help to safeguard their identity online. The growing problem of ID theft could stunt the growth of net commerce as users become wary of spending money online, warned the ITU.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/6199372.stm>

10. *December 04, Computing (UK)* — **China responsible for phishing rise.** There has been a threefold increase in global phishing e-mails in the last week, according to security vendor Marshal's Threat Research and Content Engineering (Trace) team. The significant increase is primarily due to a massive jump in phishing messages being sent from South Korea and China, according to the Trace, Marshal's monitoring arm. Bradley Anstis of Marshal said, "Like spam levels, which have almost doubled in the past month, the current spike in phishing e-mails is in part being driven by the Christmas season." Phishing e-mails increased from 0.4 percent of total spam on 24 November to now represent 2.2 percent of total spam. This signifies the

highest level of phishing e-mails since July 2006, according to Trace. The spike represents a tripling of the average phishing e-mail rates over the last six months. China is now the biggest generator of phishing e-mails in the world, jumping from 10th position last week. Major targets for phishing emails in the past week include Fifth Third Bank, National Australia Bank, and Bendigo Bank, according to Trace.

Source: <http://www.vnunet.com/computing/news/2170097/china-responsible-phishing-rise>

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## **Transportation and Border Security Sector**

11. *December 04, Department of Transportation* — **New fatigue study findings focus on train crew work schedules.** As part of an ongoing effort to target the highest risks and major causes of train accidents, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is releasing a study which provides a strong scientific rationale for evaluating railroad employee work schedules to address worker fatigue. Human factor errors are responsible for nearly 40 percent of all train accidents over the past five years. An FRA evaluation of the research findings confirms that fatigue plays a role in approximately one out of four of those accidents. “In almost every other category of train accidents, we’ve seen a steady decline in recent years, but human-factor caused accidents are increasing,” said FRA Administrator Joseph H. Boardman. The goal of the research was to determine if a fatigue model can accurately and reliably predict an increased risk of human error that could contribute to the occurrence of a train accident, explained Boardman. FRA expects this information will aid the railroad industry in improving crew scheduling practices in order to reduce that risk. A similar approach is currently utilized by the Department of Defense.

The report, “Validation and Calibration of a Fatigue Assessment Tool for Railroad Work Schedules, Summary,” as well as a supplemental agency evaluation, can be found online at <http://www.fra.dot.gov>.

Source: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/fra1806.htm>

12. *December 04, Associated Press* — **Burned match grounds Nashville plane.** An American Airline flight bound for Dallas-Fort Worth was diverted in Nashville, TN, after passengers reported smelling burning matches. Airport officials had 99 passengers and five crewmembers disembark the plane after it landed Monday morning, December 4, Nashville Airport Authority spokesperson Lynne Lowrance said. The plane, which was en route from Reagan National Airport in Washington, was searched and luggage was screened. Matches were found in the seat of one passenger, who was detained and questioned by the FBI. The matches were safety matches allowed in carry-on luggage under Transportation Security Administration rules.

Source: [http://www.knoxnews.com/kns/state/article/0.1406.KNS\\_348\\_518\\_9564.00.html](http://www.knoxnews.com/kns/state/article/0.1406.KNS_348_518_9564.00.html)

13. *December 04, WTHR (IN)* — **Teen arrested after incident at security checkpoint.** An Indianapolis teenager spent the night in jail after causing an airport security breach. The breach happened Sunday evening, December 3, at Indianapolis International Airport. Airport screeners spotted a fake gun on the teenager as he tried to get through security. Delay escorted his mother Sunday night to catch a flight on Airtran. He obtained a pass to go through the security checkpoint with his mother. During pat down a Transportation Security Administration security screener noticed Delay was wearing an armored vest. They also found a plastic handgun on



him. "The product that he had was a replica handgun. He misrepresented himself. Upon questioning his answers were not appropriate for the airport. It's not against the law to wear a bullet resistant vest but when you take a number of factors and the totality we felt it was appropriate that the incident required further investigation," said Bill Reardon, airport police chief. Airport police arrested 19-year-old Carlo Delay for disorderly conduct at an airport, a Class D felony.

Source: <http://www.wthr.com/Global/story.asp?S=5765607&nav=9Tai>

14. *December 04, The Age (Australia)* — **Committee demands more airport security.** Australia's busiest airport should be subjected to more unannounced security audits and transport security staff should have more experience, a parliamentary committee says. The committee also says more discernment is needed when handing out the cards that provide access to secure sections of airports. Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport, the committee said, needed to be audited more than any other airport in the nation because it was the busiest. The recommendations come from parliament's Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit and is in response to major developments in aviation since 2004 when the committee last reported on the issue. Staff within the government's Office of Transport Security, the committee said, needed a better understanding of regional aviation. Included in the government's policy is the need for all people who access secure sections of airports to have an Aviation Security Identification Card.

Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/news/National/Committee-demands-more-airport-security/2006/12/04/1165080874822.html>

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## **Postal and Shipping Sector**

15. *December 04, Reuters* — **U.S. transport firms consider operations in China.** As U.S. manufacturers shift their operations to China, they are clamoring for transport companies to join in the migration to shepherd the return of finished or partly finished goods. U.S. shippers like railroad operator Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corp. and trucker YRC Worldwide Inc. have responded by setting up shop in China's fragmented transportation market to provide visibility and consistency for their U.S. customers. Looking to extend its visibility, Burlington Northern Santa Fe became the first U.S. railroad to set up an office in China earlier this year. Many of the containers coming out of China are loaded onto its trains on the U.S. West Coast. "These companies have to be in China because it's what their customers need and in many cases require," said analyst Andrew Meister of Thrivent Asset Management, which holds stakes in a broad range of transport companies. For now, most transport companies operating in China focus on their U.S. customers. But some say this is just the prelude to serving the Chinese market once regulatory barriers set up by the provincial governments are removed and the country's rapidly growing economy translates into a real consumer spending boom.

Source: [http://today.reuters.com/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=governmentFilingsNews&storyID=2006-12-04T141510Z\\_01\\_N04181904\\_RTRIDST\\_0\\_TRANSPORT-CHINA-BUSINESS-FEATURE.XML](http://today.reuters.com/news/articleinvesting.aspx?type=governmentFilingsNews&storyID=2006-12-04T141510Z_01_N04181904_RTRIDST_0_TRANSPORT-CHINA-BUSINESS-FEATURE.XML)

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## **Agriculture Sector**

16. *December 03, USA TODAY* — **Agriculture crime wave grows in California.** In a rising wave of rural larceny, thieves are tracking commodity prices to steal everything that grows, plows, or sprinkles on U.S. farms. California reports the biggest problems. Theft rings that kept police busy last year chasing stolen artichokes, pomegranates and diesel fuel switched this year to nuts, avocados, citrus, tractors, irrigation pipe, and copper wiring, says Bill Yoshimoto, the supervising prosecutor for a 13-county Central California task force on farm crime. In Alabama and other southeastern states with vast pine forests, the leading theft problem is illegal timber cutting, according to police reports. In Minnesota, Ohio, and elsewhere, thieves siphon anhydrous ammonia, a fertilizer that can be used to make methamphetamine, from farmers' tanks. Yoshimoto estimates that crops and equipment worth \$1 billion will be stolen nationwide this year.

Source: [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-03-farm-crime\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-03-farm-crime_x.htm)

17. *December 01, Associated Press* — **Bison briefly escape quarantine.** Eight bison briefly escaped from an experimental brucellosis quarantine facility near Yellowstone National Park on Monday, November 27, but they didn't get very far. The facility holds 47 bison between one and two years old. The animals were captured as calves as they left Yellowstone National Park the past two winters. They then became part of the quarantine program meant to determine whether certified disease-free bison can be sorted from the park herd. All the animals have been tested several times, as researchers try to find the best way to test for brucellosis. The overall goal is to eventually release brucellosis-free bison on other public or tribal lands. Some could be ready for release in the fall of 2008, if all goes as planned.

Source: <http://www.casperstartribune.net/articles/2006/12/01/news/regional/333a1cf2db8877a88725723600711b0c.txt>

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## **Food Sector**

18. *December 03, Star-Ledger (NJ)* — **E. coli outbreak sickens 11 in central New Jersey.** A serious E. coli outbreak in central New Jersey has led to 11 confirmed cases and at least six suspected cases over the past two weeks. The victims, from towns in Middlesex, Somerset and Monmouth counties, are primarily children, though two adults also have been infected, said Middlesex County Director of Health David Papi. In the two most serious cases, the victims have developed hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS), a serious condition that can cause permanent kidney damage. Those victims, along with four others, remained hospitalized last night, Papi said. "This is a significant outbreak of a serious disease, and a significant amount of people are ill," he said, calling the magnitude of the outbreak uncommon. Investigators have yet to determine the source of the outbreak, though a Taco Bell restaurant on Stelton Road in South Plainfield is suspected. Nine of the 11 confirmed victims ate at the Taco Bell, and on Thursday, November 30, the fast food restaurant agreed to voluntarily shut down until the source is identified, Papi said.

Source: <http://www.nj.com/news/ledger/jersey/index.ssf?base/news-5/1165129713175630.xml&coll=1>

19. *December 01, Associated Press* — **Virginia county drops ban on home-cooked meals at homeless shelters.** After receiving criticism, Fairfax County, VA, has decided it won't bar residents from cooking food in home and church kitchens and donating it to homeless shelters. Gerald E. Connolly, chairman of the county's Board of Supervisors, blamed overzealous local employees for the policy and said he was not aware that county health officials were targeting home-cooked meals prepared in uncertified kitchens. Health officials told homeless programs and a coalition of nonprofit groups and churches that runs a winter-shelter program that food had to be prepared in county-approved commercial kitchens. There haven't been any reported cases of food-borne illnesses tied to home-cooked food served in shelters, but health officials say few food poisonings end up being reported to authorities.  
Source: <http://www.dailypress.com/news/local/virginia/dp-dc-homelessfoodban1201dec01.0.6855108.story?coll=dp-headlines-virginia>
20. *December 01, Dow Jones* — **Cattle ranchers want U.S. to halt beef trade with South Korea.** Cattle ranchers want the U.S. government to halt beef trade with South Korea because the country is blocking shipments from a meatpacker in Kansas. In a letter to the Bush administration on Friday, December 1, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association said, "It is clear that commercially viable beef trade can't take place with South Korea." Both countries have agreed to accept only boneless beef from the U.S. because some Asian countries consider bone to carry a greater risk for mad cow disease. That is stricter than international rules, which deem many bone-in cuts of beef to be safe. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns has harshly criticized South Korea, arguing that officials there had "invented" a standard for imports.  
Source: <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/content.asp?contentid=87864>

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## **Water Sector**

21. *December 03, NBC (CA)* — **Water main break in San Diego, California, creates big sinkhole and waterless residents.** Dozens of San Diegans were without water for most of the day Sunday, December 3, after a water main break in their neighborhood, NBC 7/39 reported. The break left behind a 20-by-15-foot sinkhole. The situation also left nearly 80 residents without water as water crews worked to repair the cracked 16-inch cast-iron pipe that was put in the ground 64 years ago. As they pumped out the water it still seeped up from below. "It's another unfortunate reminder that we've got crumbling infrastructure in San Diego," Mayor Jerry Sanders said. City water officials said a break like this happens about once every three days throughout San Diego mostly because of old, deteriorating cast iron. Mayor Jerry Sanders is proposing a four-year rate hike for water and wastewater to pay the \$600 million price to fix the problem. City water officials said San Diego has about 190 miles of cast iron pipe underground and that will take about 10 years to replace.  
Source: <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/10454037/detail.html>

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## **Public Health Sector**

22. *December 04, Reuters* — **WHO launches new drive for malaria vaccine by 2015.** The World Health Organization (WHO) launched a new global effort on Monday, December 4, to find a vaccine against malaria, which infects up to 500 million people each year, and the donors to pay for it. The Malaria Vaccine Technology Roadmap aims to develop and license a first generation vaccine by 2015 against the mosquito-borne disease which kills more than one million people a year, mainly African children. "The Roadmap marks the first concerted global attempt at mapping out a shared plan of action for making a preventive malaria vaccine reality," Marie-Paule Kieny, a top WHO official.  
Source: <http://health.yahoo.com/news/169519:ylt=AiMpBDeh.pxK76WLAi1vaumxbAB>
23. *December 03, Cruise Ship Report* — **Freedom of the Seas latest cruise ship hit by the norovirus.** The world's largest cruise ship, Freedom of the Seas, returned to Miami on Sunday, December 3, with more than 380 passengers and crew sickened by what was believed to be the norovirus, according to Royal Caribbean Cruise Line officials. The outbreak struck Freedom during a week-long cruise to the western Caribbean, and was likely brought aboard on November 26 by an ill guest, according to the company. The norovirus, spread by contact, can quickly sweep through enclosed areas like cruise ships.  
Source: <http://www.cruise-ship-report.com/News/120306.htm>
24. *December 01, Center for Infectious Disease Research & Policy (MN)* — **Pandemic triage plan addresses tough ventilator decisions.** Canadian infectious disease and critical care experts, working on behalf of Ontario pandemic planners, have developed one of the first triage plans for pandemic influenza. The protocol is designed to guide clinicians' triage decisions for patients with and without influenza during the first days and weeks of a pandemic when the critical care system is overwhelmed and resources are scarce. The report was published in the November issue of the Canadian Medical Association Journal. In developing a protocol for pandemic influenza triage, the group used components from other types of triage plans, such as severity scoring systems. The pandemic triage plan has four components: inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria, minimum qualifications for survival, and a color-coded prioritization tool. The inclusion criteria identify patients who may benefit from critical care treatment, focusing on respiratory failure.  
Report: <http://www.cmaj.ca/cgi/content/full/175/11/1377>  
Source: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/dec0106triage.html>
25. *December 01, Nature* — **Could RNA interfere with prion disease?** Prion diseases have become the newest target for treatment with RNA interference (RNAi). The gene-silencing technique has been used to prolong the lives of mice infected with scrapie, a disease similar to Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD). But the news is bittersweet — the high proportion of cells that must be treated with RNAi before seeing a beneficial effect means the approach is a long way from a cure for prion diseases in humans. One possible approach to fighting the diseases involves knocking out the presence of prions altogether, including both the normal and abnormal forms. Alexander Pfeifer at the University of Bonn, Germany, and his colleagues wanted to know whether knocking out a smaller percentage of the prion genes — something that could in theory be achieved using RNAi in adult brains — would also protect against the disease. The team used RNAi to create transgenic mice in which the prion gene had been

knocked out of a varying proportion of their cells. The technique worked, significantly extending mouse lifespan. But only if two-thirds or more of the cells had their prion-protein gene turned off.

Report: <http://www.jci.org/cgi/reprint/116/12/3204>

Source: <http://www.nature.com/news/2006/061127/full/061127-15.html>

- 26. *November 30, University of California–Berkeley* — New finding points way to foiling anthrax's tricks.** University of California (UC), Berkeley, chemists have discovered a trick that anthrax bacteria use to make an end run around the body's defenses, but which may turn out to be their Achilles' heel. The UC Berkeley scientists uncovered the trick while studying how these deadly bacteria steal iron from their human hosts to grow and reproduce. Anthrax bacteria are known to produce two small molecules — bacillibactin and petrobactin — that snatch iron away from the human body's iron transporter molecules, called transferrin. These scavengers, or "siderophores," are essential to anthrax's ability to grow rapidly, especially after the spores are inhaled, though why the bacteria need two siderophores to do the job has been an enigma. The new study shows why anthrax bacteria require two siderophores working by two different mechanisms. Siderocalin, the human immune protein, binds bacillibactin and effectively sidelines it, the researchers found. Apparently, anthrax fielded a second "stealth" iron scavenger, petrobactin, to get around the human defense against the first scavenger. Petrobactin is not bound by siderocalin.

Abstract: <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/abstract/0607055103v1>

Source: [http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2006/11/30\\_siderophore.shtml](http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2006/11/30_siderophore.shtml)

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## **Government Sector**

- 27. *December 03, Associated Press* — School killings up slightly, government study shows.** At least 21 people were killed at school during the 2004–05 academic year, a slight increase from the year before, the government reported Sunday, December 3. The study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics does not include data from fatal shootings in Wisconsin, Colorado, and Pennsylvania this fall. The 21 killings at school-related events, between July 2004 and June 2005, targeted victims between age five and 18, said Katrina Baum, co-author of the 2006 Indicators of School Crime and Safety. Over the previous year, 19 people were killed. The study notes that four of every 1,000 students in 2004 reported being the victim of violent crimes — compared with six of every 1,000 in 2003. Researchers polled students between 12 and 18 for that part of the survey, co-written by the Education Department's National Center for Education Statistics. Also in 2005, 24 percent of students questioned said that gangs were at their schools — up three percent from 2003.

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2006—Executive Summary:

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/crimeindicators/>

Source: [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-03-school-violence\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-03-school-violence_x.htm)

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## **Emergency Services Sector**

28. *December 01, Global Security Newswire* — **DHS disaster preparedness ads move toward an "all hazards" campaign.** The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) new commercials don't mention terrorism as they direct viewers to the government disaster preparedness Website. While the Website's focus was explicitly on terrorism when it was launched in 2003, DHS officials said the agency is now moving toward an "all hazards" campaign. Along with the commercials, the Website itself has changed drastically. In 2003, the main page of the site declared, "Terrorism forces us to make a choice. ... Don't be afraid. Be ready." There were links to information about what might happen in the event of biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological attacks. In the Website's most recent iteration in 2006, the word terrorism does not appear on the site's homepage. Instead, families are advised to "Prepare. Plan. Stay informed." "I think the move away from terrorism probably reflects the fact that it's not resonating as well anymore and people don't want to be scared anymore," said Michael Stebbins, a scientist with the Federation of American Scientists. "It's better to reach out and appeal to them on a different level."

DHS disaster preparedness Website: <http://www.ready.gov/>

Source: [http://www.govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=35589&dcn=to\\_daysnews](http://www.govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=35589&dcn=to_daysnews)

29. *December 01, Government Technology* — **First tsunami detection buoy deployed in Indian Ocean.** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) joined the government of Thailand in launching the first Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami (DART) buoy station in the Indian Ocean to assist in detecting tsunamis. With funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development, NOAA built and provided the DART station on behalf of the U.S. government. The station's data will be available to all nations through the World Meteorological Organization Global Telecommunications System and will be part of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems. The DART system provides real-time tsunami detection as waves travel across open waters. The stations consist of a bottom pressure sensor that is anchored to the seafloor and a companion moored surface buoy. An acoustic link transmits data from the bottom pressure sensor to the surface buoy, and then satellite links relay the data to ground stations.

Source: <http://www.govtech.net/news/news.php?id=102642>

30. *November 30, Government Technology* — **Ohio conducts pandemic exercise.** With estimates reporting an influenza pandemic could cause up to 40 percent of the workforce to be absent, Ohio Governor Bob Taft and key staff from several state agencies Thursday, November 30, conducted an exercise to address continuity of state government operations if a pandemic were to occur. "If a pandemic would occur," said Taft, "there is a likelihood that many state workers may be sick or caring for sick loved ones during an outbreak. We must plan how state government will operate under challenging circumstances." The tabletop exercise focused on three key objectives: 1) How agencies will provide essential services during a pandemic, 2) how agencies can collaborate and share resources to provide such services and protect essential facilities, records and other assets, and 3) how to resume full operations after a pandemic.

Source: [http://www.govtech.net/magazine/channel\\_story.php/102609](http://www.govtech.net/magazine/channel_story.php/102609)

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## **Information Technology and Telecommunications Sector**

31. *December 04, Network World* — **Research group finds high level of IT deficiencies.** IT vulnerabilities such as inadequate documentation and poor PC access controls put enterprises at risk of being noncompliant with regulatory mandates and prone to security events — and most companies have at least a few such deficiencies present in their environments, according to research released Monday, December 4. The IT Policy Compliance Group surveyed 876 corporations and government agencies, and 69 percent said during the first half of this year they had averaged between three and 15 “compliance deficiencies” that had to be corrected. Another 20 percent said their organizations tallied more than 16 deficiencies, with 36 on average. The remaining 11 percent — the top performers in the survey — reported an average of only two compliance deficiencies. The report, entitled “Managing Spending in IT to Improve Compliance Results,” noted that 55 percent of these compliance deficiencies led directly to financial losses due to a security event, and 45 percent were of the type that required remediation to pass external audits or other regulatory reviews.  
Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2006/120406-research-group-finds-high-levels-of-it-deficiencies.html>
32. *December 01, Federal Computer Week* — **China a major cyberthreat, commission warns.** China is fielding information warfare units and developing anti-satellite capabilities aimed at countering U.S. military technology, according to a U.S. congressional commission. China’s cyberwarfare strategy has switched from a defensive to an offensive posture, with the goal of attacking enemy networks and denying adversaries access to information, said the U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission (USCC) in its annual report, released November 16. Chinese strategy focuses on U.S. systems that perform command and control or deliver precision weapons, the report states. China is enhancing its advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities in response to U.S. progress. China now has mobile command and control centers that use wireless and satellite communications to relay battlefield information. “It’s very clear from the doctoral writings of the [People’s Liberation Army] that they take cyberwarfare as one of the main ways they must be ready to attack the United States,” said USCC Chairman Larry Wortzel in an interview. “Their overall doctrine holds that a modern war in the 21st century involves cyberwarfare, electronic attack and warfare in space.”  
Report: [http://www.uscc.gov/annual\\_report/2006/annual\\_report\\_full\\_06.pdf](http://www.uscc.gov/annual_report/2006/annual_report_full_06.pdf)  
Source: <http://www.fcw.com/article96975-12-01-06-Web>
33. *December 01, Websense Security Labs* — **Malicious Website / Malicious Code: MySpace XSS QuickTime Worm.** Websense Security Labs has confirmed the existence of a worm spreading on the MySpace network. This worm is exploiting the Javascript support within Apple’s embedded QuickTime player. This is used in conjunction with a MySpace vulnerability that was announced two weeks ago on the Full-Disclosure mailing list. The vulnerabilities are being used to replace the legitimate links on the user’s MySpace profile with links to a phishing site. Once a user’s MySpace profile is infected (by viewing a malicious embedded QuickTime video), that profile is modified in two ways. The links in the user’s page are replaced with links to a phishing site, and a copy of the malicious QuickTime video is embedded into the user’s site. Any other users who visit this newly-infected profile may have their own profile infected as well. An infected profile can be identified by the presence of an empty QuickTime video or modified links in the MySpace header section, or both. Refer to source to view a screen shot.

Source: <http://www.websense.com/securitylabs/alerts/alert.php?AlertID=708>

34. *December 01, Security Focus* — **Apple DMG flaw not so serious?** A Mac programmer backed up his criticism of an allegedly exploitable flaw in the Mac OS X's disk image (.dmg) format with an analysis published on Thursday, November 30, that appears to show that the flaw, at most, causes a crash of the system. While the common wisdom in the security world is that crashes are exploitable, Mac programmer Alastair Houghton published his kernel-code analysis showing that this particular vulnerability is not. "In fact, all [the Month of Kernel Bugs Project] has found here is a bug that causes a kernel panic," Houghton wrote in his analysis. "Not a security flaw. Not a memory corruption bug. Just a completely orderly kernel panic." Alastair's analysis: <http://alastairs-place.net/2006/11/dmg-vulnerability/>  
Source: <http://www.securityfocus.com/brief/373>

### Internet Alert Dashboard

Current Port Attacks	
<b>Top 10 Target Ports</b>	4662 (eDonkey2000), 44113 (----), 6881 (bittorrent), 4672 (eMule), 2234 (directplay), 18284 (----), 1026 (win-rpc), 25 (smtp), 30743 (----), 21015 (----) Source: <a href="http://isc.incidents.org/top10.html">http://isc.incidents.org/top10.html</a> ; Internet Storm Center
To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at <a href="mailto:soc@us-cert.gov">soc@us-cert.gov</a> or visit their Website: <a href="http://www.us-cert.gov">www.us-cert.gov</a> .	
Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <a href="https://www.it-isac.org/">https://www.it-isac.org/</a> .	

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## Commercial Facilities/Real Estate, Monument & Icons Sector

35. *December 03, Associated Press* — **Air Force radio frequency jams garage door openers.** A secretive Air Force facility in Colorado Springs tested a radio frequency this past week that it would use to communicate with first responders in the event of a homeland security threat. But the frequency also controls an estimated 50 million garage door openers, and hundreds of residents in the area found that theirs had suddenly stopped working. Capt. Tracy Giles of the 21st Space Wing said Air Force officials were trying to figure out how to resolve the problem of their signal overpowering garage door remotes. The signals were coming from Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, home to the North American Aerospace Defense Command, a joint U.S. and Canadian operation set up during the Cold War to monitor Soviet missile and bomber threats. Technically, the Air Force has the right to the frequency, which it began using nearly three years ago at some bases. Signals have previously interfered with garage doors near bases in Florida, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. David McGuire, whose Overhead Door Co. received more than 400 calls for help, said the Air Force may be able to slightly adjust the transmission frequency to solve the problem. If not, it will cost homeowners about \$250 to have new units installed.  
Source: <http://abclocal.go.com/kgo/story?section=bizarre&id=4819479>

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## **General Sector**

Nothing to report.

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