



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 18 May 2007

Current
Nationwide
Threat Level is
ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF
TERRORIST ATTACKS
[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)
<http://www.dhs.gov/>

Daily Highlights

- The Indianapolis Star reports in what appears to be one of the broadest online school security failures ever in the U.S., thousands of confidential Indianapolis Public Schools student records were available to the public through Google searches. (See item [11](#))
- The Los Angeles Daily News reports travelers were evacuated from Terminal 2 at Los Angeles International Airport Wednesday night, May 16, after baggage screening equipment detected two inactive World War II-era mortar shells inside luggage at a security checkpoint. (See item [19](#))

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. *May 17, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission* — **FERC releases 2007 Summer Energy Market Assessment.** In 2006 most wholesale electricity prices declined due to lower natural gas prices during the summer and abundant Northwest hydroelectric generation. There were no real failures of the interstate power grid in 2006, though three million Americans lost power last year due to failures of local distribution systems, including outages in the Saint Louis area and in New York City. The summer of 2006, consequently, is not a typical comparison point for our look forward to summer 2007. Though many significant variables remain the same, the outlook

is different. Wholesale prices for electricity are likely to be higher this summer in all regions of the United States, regardless of regional market structure. The main reason is higher expected prices for natural gas. Natural gas currently functions as the most significant price-setting fuel in U.S. electric generation. Second, generation additions over the past year have not been as robust as in the past years, leaving many regions with tight supply and demand balances. However, some regional transmission and natural gas transportation investments appear to have increased the flexibility to meet load in areas including Southern California, New England and Florida.

Source: <http://www.ferc.gov/market-oversight/mkt-views/2007/05-17-07.pdf>

2. *May 16, USA Today* — **Utilities brace for worker shortage.** The nation faces a shortage of utility workers just as it gears up for the biggest wave of construction in decades to meet soaring power demand. The crunch is already affecting many cities — slowing new hookups for electric service, delaying post-storm power restorations and forcing utilities to skimp on maintenance. It cuts across job categories, from line workers and plant operators to senior engineers. "It's creating a real serious crisis," says Michael Brown of Hay Group. About half the U.S.'s 400,000 power industry workers are eligible to retire in the next five to ten years, according to Carnegie Mellon University's Electricity Industry Center. The industry already has shed 40 percent of its workforce since 1990 in response to deregulation. With power demand expected to soar 50 percent by 2030, utilities are planning hundreds of plants and thousands of miles of transmission lines. Especially affected is the nuclear power industry, which is girding for a revival after a decades-long construction hiatus. The 33 nuclear reactors on the drawing board "will not get built as quickly as we want," says Dale Klein of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. "You'll see regions where there are shortages of electricity" that trigger blackouts or brownouts.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/employment/2007-05-16-power-shortage-cover_N.htm

3. *May 16, Associated Press* — **Utilities say stolen copper wiring have led to disruptions.** A spike in copper thefts has two of Detroit's largest utilities offering rewards of up to \$2,500 for tips leading to the arrests of anyone selling or buying stolen copper. AT&T and Detroit Edison report a surge in copper wire thefts since the beginning of the year. The slicing and stealing of copper cable has led to 25,000 combined phone and power interruptions in Detroit since January 1. "It's a time bomb here for residents. Someone at some point will not be able to access 911," Gail Torreano of AT&T Michigan said. Torreano and Bob Buckler, president of Detroit Edison, have asked citizens to report copper crimes. Buckler cited several cases in which thieves used power saws to cut down electric poles in less-populated areas of the city to get to the copper wiring. Copper prices hit an all-time high at about \$4 a pound last May. Last week, the price was \$3.70 per pound.

Source: http://www.examiner.com/a-730869~Utilities_say_stolen_copper_wiring_have_led_to_disruptions.html

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Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials Sector

4.

May 17, WFAA-TV (TX) — **Chemical spill leads to home evacuations.** Eleven homes were evacuated Wednesday night, May 16, after about 100 gallons of an agricultural insecticide spilled at an Ennis, TX, chemical plant. City officials said there were two releases of methyl parathion, classified as an "extremely hazardous" pesticide by the World Health Organization. After the first incident at 8 p.m. CDT, the Schirm USA Inc. plant in the 2800 block of Oak Grove Road and buildings within 1,000 yards were evacuated as a precaution. A second release at 9:10 p.m. CDT expanded the evacuation zone to homes within 5,000 yards on Ensign Road and also to the PetSmart distribution center as a precaution. Experts from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality examined the area and permitted the evacuees to return home after 6 a.m. CDT Thursday. The Schirm plant remained shut down pending a further investigation.

Source: http://www.wfaa.com/sharedcontent/dws/wfaa/latestnews/stories/wfaa070516_mo_ennispill.77c13ff9.html

5. *May 17, Bryan-College Station Eagle (TX)* — **Chemicals force evacuation.** Three workers were hospitalized and a handful of guests were evacuated Wednesday, May 16, in College Station, TX, after a small chemical explosion near a hotel swimming pool. The blast went off when a maintenance worker at the Clarion Hotel on Texas Avenue was mixing chlorine and other pool chemicals, causing a dangerous reaction. A maintenance worker suffered burns to his face and eyes, another worker suffered burns on his hands and arms, and a third experienced respiratory problems. The reaction also released chlorine gas, which is toxic, into the air in the hotel and caused an employee to suffer breathing problems. A hotel employee said late Wednesday that four guests were in the building when the incident happened, but none were hurt. The hotel was evacuated for about three hours.

Source: http://www.theeagle.com/stories/051707/local_20070517013.php

6. *May 16, WMTW (ME)* — **Science experiment gone bad forces school's evacuation.** Portland, ME, High School was evacuated on Wednesday morning, May 16, after fumes from a science experiment entered the school's ventilation system. Superintendent Mary Jo O'Connor said that the incident began when an experiment went "bad" in a second-floor chemistry lab. Although the fumes were sucked into the ventilation system, she said something malfunctioned, and the fumes were recycled throughout the school. A faculty member was taken to the hospital as a precaution and the students were sent home for the day.

Source: <http://www.wmtw.com/news/13329768/detail.html?rss=port&psp=news>

7. *May 16, Associated Press* — **Union Pacific trains derail in Washington state, spilling diesel fuel, disrupting Amtrak.** Two freight trains derailed in western Washington early Wednesday, May 16, disrupting Amtrak travel and spilling diesel fuel near a river a few miles upstream from the Nisqually Delta National Wildlife Refuge, officials said. No injuries were reported, but Mark Davis of Union Pacific said at least two locomotives and an undetermined number of rail cars were off the tracks. Diesel fuel was leaking from at least one engine near the Nisqually River, said Jenny Sharp, a spokesperson for the DuPont Fire Department. She said power lines were down and most of the town of DuPont was without electricity. It wasn't immediately clear what started the derailments.

Source: http://www.nctimes.com/articles/2007/05/17/news/state/17_49_345_16_07.txt

8.

May 16, KCBD (TX) — **Propane leak prompts evacuation.** Authorities have evacuated at least one Wolfforth, TX, business in response to a propane leak at West Texas Gas. The business is located on U.S. 62/82 in Wolfforth. The situation caused traffic congestion and detours in the area. The leak occurred at the small tank filling station on site.
Source: http://www.kcbd.com/Global/story.asp?S=6526546&nav=menu69_3

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

9. *May 17, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO-07-578: Defense Acquisitions: Greater Synergies Possible for DoD's Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Systems (Report).** The Department of Defense (DoD) is experiencing a growing demand for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) assets to provide vital information in support of military operations. Over the next seven years, DoD plans to invest over \$28 billion in existing and new airborne ISR acquisition systems. This represents a marked increase over prior ISR investments. Given the significant investments, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) was asked to (1) evaluate various ISR platforms for potential synergies and assess their cost and schedule status and the impact of any increases or delays on legacy systems and (2) assess the effectiveness of ISR investment decisions. To assess cost and schedule status, GAO reviewed programmatic and budget documentation. To evaluate investment decisions, GAO collected data on system capability, mission, and concept of operation and analyzed them for similarities. GAO is recommending that DoD (1) develop and implement an integrated enterprise-level investment strategy approach that draws on the results of ongoing studies and (2) report to the defense committees by August 1, 2007, the results of the ISR studies and identify specific plans and actions it intends to get greater jointness in ISR programs. DoD generally believes current initiatives will address GAO's recommendations.
Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07578high.pdf>
Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-578>

10. *May 17, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO-07-842T: DoD Personnel Clearances: Delays and Inadequate Documentation Found for Industry Personnel (Testimony).** Individuals working for the private industry are playing a larger role in national security work conducted by Department of Defense (DoD) and other federal agencies. As of May 2006, industry personnel held about 34 percent of DoD-maintained personnel security clearances. The damage that the unauthorized disclosure of classified information can cause to national security necessitates the prompt and careful consideration of who is granted a security clearance. Long-standing delays in determining clearance eligibility and other challenges led the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to designate the DoD personnel security clearance program as a high-risk area in January 2005 and again in GAO's January 2007 update of the high-risk areas. In February 2005, DoD transferred its security clearance investigations functions to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and now obtains almost all of its clearance investigations from OPM. The Office of Management and Budget is responsible for effective implementation of policy relating to determinations of eligibility for access to classified information. This testimony addresses the timeliness of the process and completeness of documentation used to determine eligibility of industry personnel for top secret clearances in January and February 2006. This statement relies primarily on GAO's September

2006 report (GAO-06-1070).

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07842thigh.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-842T>

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Banking and Finance Sector

- 11. *May 17, Indianapolis Star* — Indianapolis Public Schools student data exposed.** In what appears to be one of the broadest online school security failures ever in the U.S., thousands of confidential Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) student records were available to the public through Google searches. An Indianapolis Star reporter using Google found information on at least 7,500 students and some staff members, including phone numbers, birth dates, medical information and Social Security numbers. Such student information is required to be kept private under federal law. Internet security experts said the inadvertent release of information resulted from a network setup that was sloppy. It appears that teachers and students unwittingly posted the files to the Web when they tried to save their work on the system. IPS officials moved to correct the problem on Wednesday morning, May 16. Superintendent Eugene White said, "This matter has received the highest priority of the district, and the IT department has made the necessary changes." He also said the district would continue to investigate what went wrong. Yet copies of the records may remain accessible on other computers for some time. Wednesday night, duplicate versions remained up on Google. IPS officials said they had contacted Google about removing copies of district files.
Source: <http://www.indystar.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070517/LOCAL18/705170491&template=printart>
- 12. *May 17, Finextra (UK)* — Swift launches secure e-mail service.** Financial messaging network Swift has launched SwiftNet Mail, a secure e-mail product that operates on the IP-based SwiftNet network rather than the Internet. The interbank co-operative said last October that it was moving into the person-to-person messaging market and was piloting its SwiftNet Mail service with a number of banks. The service allows users to securely transmit messages containing sensitive data over SwiftNet using the e-mail package of their choice. Messages are despatched between member banks via SwiftNet using a software program that sits on the SwiftAlliance interface device. Swift says the service eliminates the need for complex push-server and desktop client software and claims the network is free from spam and phishing threats.
Source: <http://finextra.com/fullstory.asp?id=16929>
- 13. *May 17, The Age (Australia)* — Scammers behind bogus Dell e-mail.** Dell's customer support center was overloaded this morning, after e-mails appearing to come from Dell lobbed into inboxes around the country to inform recipients their credit card had been charged \$865. But the e-mail, which purported to be a confirmation from Dell UK of an order for a "Canon DF-E037 8.0 MP Digital Camera", turned out to be a phishing attack. The attackers directed people to a malicious Website which they said would allow them to "check the order in your profile". Dell moved quickly to inform its customers of the fraudulent e-mail, posting an alert on the front page of Dell.com.au and a message on its global Direct2Dell blog.
Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2007/05/17/1178995294688.html>

14. *May 17, Associated Press* — **Texans arrested in multistate identity theft scheme.** A pair of Texas men face a variety of charges after authorities say they stole identities and defrauded businesses in three states of more than \$1 million. Michael McDowell, 30, and Jason Mark Freeman, 31, both of Dallas, are being held in the Bossier Parish maximum security jail in Plain Dealing, LA, after authorities say they had to lay down a spike strip to stop their vehicle during a May 8 chase. In Caddo Parish, an investigation began after an identity theft victim in Oklahoma notified the parish's White Collar Crimes Task Force that someone in Shreveport was trying to open an account using his name, sheriff's spokesperson Cindy Chadwick said. The men used stolen identities and tax information from various businesses to open accounts and obtain merchandise such as computers and tools on credit, Chadwick said. They then shipped the items to businesses in Dallas and Wyoming where they were sold at half price. At least \$70,000 worth merchandise was stolen in the Shreveport area while the two were staying in hotels between Monroe and Tyler, Texas, Chadwick said.
Source: <http://www.nbc5i.com/news/13336908/detail.html>

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Transportation and Border Security Sector

15. *May 17, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO-07-561: International Trade: Persistent Weaknesses in the In-Bond Cargo System Impede Customs and Border Protection's Ability to Address Revenue, Trade, and Security Concerns (Report).** The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) must strive to balance its competing goals of facilitating trade, providing port security, and collecting trade revenues. CBP's in-bond system, which allows goods to transit the United States without formally entering U.S. commerce, must also balance these goals. In response to concerns that previously identified weaknesses in the in-bond system have not been remedied, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) examined (1) the purpose of the in-bond system and the extent of its use (2) CBP efforts to ensure that revenues are collected and trade concerns are minimized, and (3) CBP efforts to ensure that security-related inspections are properly targeted. GAO examined audit reports and agency documents, interviewed officials at CBP headquarters and at 10 CBP port offices. GAO also discussed the in-bond system with trade groups impacted by the in-bond system. GAO is recommending that the Commissioner of CBP take action in three areas (1) collect and use improved information on in-bond shipments to enable better informed decisions, (2) assess the systemic problems associated with identifying open in-bonds and take steps to resolve these problems, and (3) ensure that the compliance measurement system is performed to improve CBP's in-bond management. DHS agreed with most of our recommendations in these three areas.
Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07561high.pdf>
Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-561>

16. *May 17, Associated Press* — **AirTran extends latest bid for Midwest.** AirTran Holdings Inc. on Thursday, May 17, extended until June 8 its latest offer of \$389 million in cash and stock for rival Midwest Air Group, giving more time for the proposal that has already gained the support of more than half of Midwest's shareholders. The Orlando, FL-based operator of low-cost carrier AirTran Airways said that as of Wednesday, stockholders agreed to tender 56.6 percent

of the Milwaukee-based carrier's outstanding shares, or 13.9 million, to AirTran subsidiary Galena Acquisition Corp. Milwaukee-based Midwest's board last month unanimously rejected AirTran's \$15 per-share bid, calling it "inadequate" and saying the company could be more profitable alone. It is the parent company of Midwest Airlines and Midwest Connect. AirTran has been trying to acquire Midwest since 2005. The deal would form the country's second-largest low-cost carrier behind Southwest Airlines Co. AirTran took its courtship public in December as Midwest resisted, then directly approached the rival's shareholders with the offer that had been set to expire.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/ap/fn/4813350.html>

- 17. *May 17, Associated Press* — Memorial Day travel expected to rise.** Despite record fuel prices above \$3 per gallon, more Americans will travel by car over the Memorial Day holiday weekend than a year ago, according to a survey by travel agency AAA. In a sign that energy costs will affect behavior, however, AAA said travelers are planning to stay closer to home and take shorter trips. Travel-related expenses for U.S. households are expected average nearly \$600. AAA forecast that 38.3 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more, an increase of 1.7 percent from last year. Roughly 32.1 million travelers — or 84 percent of the total — will drive, up 1.8 percent from last year, AAA said. The number of Americans traveling by plane is expected to rise by one percent to 4.4 million. The remaining travelers will get to their destinations by bus or train. The average retail price of unleaded gasoline nationwide was \$3.10 per gallon on Wednesday, May 16, according to AAA and the Oil Price Information Service. Source: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2007-05-17-travel-aaa-forecast_N.htm

- 18. *May 17, Associated Press* — Pennsylvania and New Jersey agree on Delaware River dredging project.** The governors of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, ending a nearly 18-month standoff, have settled on a plan to deepen the Delaware River's shipping channel in a bid to make ports in Philadelphia and southern New Jersey more competitive with others on the East Coast. Pennsylvania will be responsible for all local costs and will accept the 26 million cubic yards of riverbed that will be hauled out to deepen the channel by five feet, Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell announced Thursday. Rendell and the other Pennsylvania representatives on the Delaware River Port Authority, which runs ports, bridges and a commuter train line in the Philadelphia area, have been boycotting the agency's meetings since late 2005 in an effort to force New Jersey officials to agree to the dredging. The DRPA met Thursday for the first since November 2005. The project is intended to deepen the river's more than 100-mile long shipping channel from 40 to 45 feet to allow bigger ships to access Philadelphia-area ports. Ports in the New York area and Baltimore can already accept such ships. Rendell said the project's cost wasn't yet known, but officials previously estimated it would cost \$300 million to \$500 million. Source: <http://www.centredaily.com/news/state/story/98119.html>

- 19. *May 17, Los Angeles Daily News* — LAX terminal evacuated after inactive mortar shells found in luggage.** Travelers were evacuated from Terminal 2 at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Wednesday night, May 16, after baggage screening equipment detected two inactive World War II-era mortar shells inside luggage at a security checkpoint, police said this morning. Officers from the Los Angeles Police Department's bomb squad were called out to the airport just before 10 p.m. PDT Wednesday, said Los Angeles Police Officer Karen Smith, a spokesperson. Officials found the shells, inert novelty mock World War II drop bombs, which

weighed about five pounds and were 10–inches long, inside the luggage of an unidentified woman in her 30s traveling to Canada. The bomb squad determined that the shells were not a threat and the shells were confiscated. The woman was not arrested. About two hours later, the evacuated passengers were allowed back into the airport.

Source: http://www.dailynews.com/ci_5917102?source=most_viewed

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Postal and Shipping Sector

20. *May 17, DMNews* — USPS says rate changes going smoothly. Despite what could be called the most complex rate classification case in the U.S. Postal Service’s history, very few issues have arisen since the new rates were implemented May 14. That was the information delivered by Mike Plunkett, acting vice president of pricing and classification at the United States Postal Service, in his presentation at the quarterly Mailers Technical Advisory Committee meeting May 16. “While the reconsideration on the Priority Mail Flat Rate box price and the nonmachinable surcharge complicated things a little, even those things are moving ahead pretty smoothly,” Plunkett said. He was referring to the fact that the USPS Board of Governors on May 2 approved a lower Priority Flat Rate Box and a new First–Class Mail nonmachinable surcharge application.

Source: <http://www.dmnews.com/cms/dm-news/direct-mail/41137.html>

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Agriculture Sector

21. *May 15, Associated Press* — Agriculture officials try to halt spread of tree–killing beetle. Agriculture officials are hoping to stop the eastward spread of the emerald ash borer beetle, an invasive, hard–to–control insect that has killed more than 20 million trees in the Midwest and Canada and is heading toward Virginia. The beetle is indigenous to eastern Russia, northern China, Japan and Korea and was initially found in southeastern Michigan in 2002, likely arriving in ash wood used in packing material. Because the insect has no native predators in North America, the infestation has continued to spread through parts of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Maryland — areas now under a federal quarantine. Fewer than 300 damaged nursery trees were found in Virginia in 2003, and no further infestation has been found after they were destroyed, according to Debbie Martin, the invasive species coordinator for the state agriculture department's office of plant and pest services. The infested trees were purchased originally by a Maryland nursery in spring 2003 from a Michigan nursery. Some of these trees were purchased by a landscaper who planted them in Vienna, VA, that July. A nursery inspector discovered the infested trees in August 2003 at the Maryland nursery, and the Vienna trees were subsequently removed and destroyed, Martin said.

Source: <http://www.dailypress.com/news/local/virginia/dp-va--tree-killingbeetl0515may15.0.6926395.story?coll=dp-headlines-virginia>

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Food Sector

22. *May 17, USAgNet* — **Japan rejects request to end beef imports age limit.** Japanese agriculture minister Toshikatsu Matsuoka rejected a U.S. request to eliminate a cattle age limit on beef imports from the U.S. at a meeting with his U.S. counterpart Mike Johanns. Dow Jones News reports that when resuming U.S. beef imports last year after a ban over mad–cow disease fears, Japan limited imports to those from cattle aged 20 months or less. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Johanns asked Matsuoka to accept an expected decision by the World Organization for Animal Health to allow the U.S. to export beef irrespective of cattle age, said a Kyodo News report. Matsuoka was quoted by Kyodo as answering that Japan has considered beef import conditions in line with its own scientific procedures.
Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.php?Id=1130&yr=2007>
23. *May 16, American Society for Microbiology* — **New test may allow for rapid detection of Salmonella in meat.** Researchers from Denmark have developed a 12–hour test for detecting Salmonella in meat. Salmonella is one of the main causes of food–borne illnesses worldwide. Detection methods have proved costly and laborious often requiring up to five days to get results. The researchers developed a 12–hour DNA–based method for detecting Salmonella bacteria using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and tested it in minced meat samples following eight hours of preenrichment. Results were then compared to a reference culture method which previously tested 100 minced meat and poultry samples following 24 hours of preenrichment and showed relative accuracy and sensitivity of 99 percent and specificity of 100 percent.
Source: <http://www.asm.org/Media/index.asp?bid=50631>
24. *May 11, San Diego Union–Tribune* — **Candy found to have high levels of lead.** State health officials are warning people not to eat three brands of candy made in Mexico and sold in California because they contain up to five times the U.S. government's permitted level of lead. The tainted brands are Lucas Limon, Lucas Limon Con Chile and Tama Roca Banderilla. The affected candies were found recently at Marquez Bros., a San Jose–based importer and distributor that had sent some of the products to retailers. Marquez has launched a voluntary recall.
Source: <http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/health/20070511-9999-1mu11candyrecall.html>

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Water Sector

25. *May 16, National Institutes of Health* — **Hexavalent chromium in drinking water causes cancer in lab animals.** Researchers announced Wednesday, May 16, that there is strong evidence a chemical referred to as hexavalent chromium, or chromium 6, causes cancer in laboratory animals when it is consumed in drinking water. The two–year study conducted by the National Toxicology Program (NTP) shows that animals given hexavalent chromium developed malignant tumors. The study findings were announced at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) after the NTP Board of Scientific Counselors Technical Reports Review Subcommittee completed its independent peer review of the sodium

dichromate dihydrate research report. Sodium dichromate dihydrate is an inorganic compound containing hexavalent chromium that was used in the NTP studies. Hexavalent chromium compounds are often used in electroplating, leather tanning, and textile manufacturing and have been found in some drinking water sources.

Source: <http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/may2007/niehs-16.htm>

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Public Health Sector

26. *May 16, CIDRAP News* — Syndromic surveillance: faulty alarm system or useful tool?

Small-scale syndromic surveillance—pencil-and-paper monitoring of school absenteeism or cruise-ship stomach bugs—has a long history. But the practice received a huge boost after the 2001 anthrax letter attacks. Planners fixed on electronic syndromic surveillance as the best hope for providing an early warning of the next bioterrorist attack. Congress has appropriated more than one billion dollars for state and local health departments to improve their preparedness, and given \$230 million to the largest syndromic surveillance program, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) BioSense, intended to connect the CDC to hospitals nationwide. About 30 syndromic surveillance programs, some of them predating BioSense, now operate around the U.S. Those concerned with syndromic surveillance's failings point not to the systems' failure to warn, but to how often they warn of outbreaks that do not exist. Because bioterror events are so rare, the probability of any alarm being false is high, according to Michael Stoto and colleagues at Georgetown University. They estimate that if 1,000 U.S. jurisdictions created syndromic surveillance systems, they would collectively experience more than one false alarm per day. But making a system less sensitive, so that it rings fewer false alarms, risks making it less timely—thereby undermining the early-warning mission for which it exists.

Source: <http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/cidrap/content/influenza/panflu/news/may1607surveil.html>

27. *May 16, United Press International* — Online bird flu response training offered. The U.S. government is making available a three-day training course to teach public health responders how to deal with an avian influenza outbreak. The online course offered by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists provides a standardized curriculum for local and state health system first responders concerning how to identify and control human infections and illness associated with the H5N1 strain of bird flu.

Course information: <http://www.cste.org/influenza/avian.asp>

Source: http://www.postchronicle.com/news/health/article_21281141.shtml

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Government Sector

28. *May 17, Government Accountability Office* — GAO-07-206: DHS Immigration Attorneys: Workload Analysis and Workforce Planning Efforts Lack Data and Documentation

(Report). The legal staff of key Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components—Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and Customs and Border Protection (CBP)—perform important immigration enforcement, inspection, and service functions. This report addresses the actions ICE, USCIS, and CBP legal offices are taking to identify attorney needs, determine where those attorneys should be deployed, and address staffing shortfalls. To conduct its work, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) interviewed component senior legal office officials in headquarters and regional offices and reviewed available documentation on staffing. GAO is recommending that ICE’s legal office fully document its plans for incorporating additional workforce data and enhancing its workforce tracking system; USCIS’s legal office document its plans for implementing a workload tracking system; and all three legal offices document their attorney workforce planning processes. DHS generally agreed with four of the five recommendations. CBP’s legal office disagreed with the recommendation to document its attorney workforce planning efforts. It believes that the core workforce planning principles discussed in this report are inapplicable to small offices such as its office. GAO believes that these planning principles are appropriate.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07206high.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-206>

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Emergency Services Sector

29. *May 16, Federal Emergency Management Agency* — President declares major disaster for Massachusetts. The head of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced Wednesday, May 16, that federal disaster aid has been made available for Massachusetts to supplement commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and inland and coastal flooding during the period of April 15–25, 2007. FEMA Administrator David Paulison said the assistance was authorized under a major disaster declaration issued for Massachusetts by President Bush. The President's action makes federal funding available to commonwealth and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe storms and inland and coastal flooding in Barnstable, Berkshire, Dukes, Essex, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Plymouth Counties.

Source: <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=36300>

30. *May 16, Blackanthem Military News* — Illinois National Guard unit possesses unique extraction capabilities. During tragedies, the civilian first responders who devote their lives to saving others are thrust into the public spotlight. Less visible are the military members who do precisely the same. Soldiers of the 444th Chemical Company, Illinois National Guard, and assigned to the state's Monmouth-based Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) are one such unit of military first responders. For the past year, they have split training time between their traditional mission and their CERFP mission — large-scale rescue operations. Trained in confined-space extraction, they can climb into the rubble of a collapsed building to rescue survivors and transfer them to medical support teams or decontamination teams as necessary. Because of the dangerous nature of their job, chemical companies assigned to CERFP teams receive additional hazardous material equipment and

training. While the Illinois CERFP has not yet mobilized for a real-world disaster, they have conducted several joint training operations with civilian first responders. Their largest such operation is the Vigilant Guard exercise now under way in various locations throughout Indiana. A national exercise with participants from throughout the country, the 444th has been conducting rescue operations in the aftermath of a simulated nuclear explosion.

Source: http://www.blackanthem.com/News/U_S_Military_19/Illinois_National_Guard_unit_possesses_unique_extraction_capabilities6716.shtml

31. *May 16, Firechief (IL)* — **LAX holds disaster exercise.** A full-scale, simulated aircraft disaster was conducted on Tuesday, May 15, to test the capability of Los Angeles International Airport's (LAX) emergency management system. The LAX Air Exercise tested emergency responders and mutual aid providers in a real-time, stress-filled environment in which personnel, equipment, and other resources are mobilized and deployed. With more than 700 participants -- including 200 volunteers playing victims and family members -- this exercise is considered one of the largest full-scale drills among all U.S. airports, organizers said. LAX Airport Manager Jens Rivera said, "This air exercise gives individuals and agencies the opportunity to practice and refine their emergency procedures. Our response agencies train continuously in their own specialized fields and we train airport-wide during table-top exercises." The objectives of LAX AirEx 2007 include testing the efficiency of inter-agency and inter-departmental planning and coordination in managing an airport disaster; testing current procedures of the airport emergency plan using responses under a unified command and satisfying federal requirements; and determining strengths and weaknesses in the integration of response resources with the goal toward improving individual agency and overall emergency response.

Source: http://firechief.com/news/lax_disaster_05162007/

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Information Technology and Telecommunications Sector

32. *May 17, IDG News Service* — **Estonia recovers from massive denial-of-service attack.** A spree of denial-of-service attacks against Websites in Estonia appears to be subsiding, as the government calls for greater response mechanisms to cyber attacks within the European Union. The attacks, which started around April 27, have crippled Websites for Estonia's prime minister, banks, and less-trafficked sites run by small schools, said Hillar Aareleid, chief security officer for Estonia's Computer Emergency Response Team, on Thursday, May 17. But most of the affected Websites have been able to restore service. "Yes, it's serious problem, but we are up and running," Aareleid said. Aareleid said analysts have found postings on Websites indicating Russian hackers may be involved in the attacks. However, analysis of the malicious traffic shows that computers from the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Vietnam, and others have been used in the attacks, he said. Experts from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are helping Estonia investigate the attacks, Aareleid said.

Source: http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/05/17/estonia-denial-of-service-attack_1.html

33. *May 17, IDG News Service* — **Investment firms to buy Acxiom for \$3 billion.** Customer information management company Acxiom has agreed to be acquired by two private equity firms for \$3 billion in cash. Acxiom has signed a definitive agreement to be acquired by the

equity firms Silver Lake and ValueAct Capital. The price tag includes the assumption of about \$756 million in debt, the companies announced Wednesday, May 16. They expect to close the deal in three to four months.

Source: http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/05/17/investment-firms-buy-axiom_1.html

34. May 16, eWeek — Researcher reveals two-step Vista UAC hack. A Web application developer has uncovered a two-step process for exploiting Windows Vista's User Account Control (UAC), essentially by having a Trojan piggyback on what could be a legitimate download. Robert Paveza, a senior Web application developer with Terralever, published details of the vulnerability in a paper titled, "User-Prompted Elevation of Unintended Code in Windows Vista." Paveza said in the paper that the vulnerability uses a two-part attack vector against a default Vista installation. The first step requires that malware called a proxy infection tool be downloaded and run without elevation. That software can behave as the victim expects it to while it sets up a second malicious payload in the background.

White paper: <http://www.robpaveza.net/VistaUACExploit/UACExploitWhitepaper.pdf>

Source: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,2131595,00.asp>

35. May 16, SecurityFocus — Microsoft to give more early data on flaws. Microsoft announced on Wednesday, May 16, that the company will release more information on coming patches through its Advanced Notification Service and modify the layout of its security bulletins starting in June. Under the changes, Microsoft's Security Response Center will release advanced notifications and security bulletins under the same URLs, adding in-depth vulnerability information on the second Tuesday each month to the summary of information released five days before as part of its Advanced Notification Service. The summarized information will include maximum severity and impact of the flaws, detection information and the names of affected software.

Source: <http://www.securityfocus.com/brief/502>

Internet Alert Dashboard

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