

# Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 2 January 2008



- KITV 4 Honolulu reported that a man was arrested Saturday night after he tried to board a plane at Honolulu's airport with two fully-loaded guns. The individual had hidden the semi-automatics in his luggage and refused to tell officers why. Both guns were loaded and concealed in his packed clothes, officials said. (See items 2)
- According to the Associated Press, the loss or theft of personal data such as credit card and Social Security numbers soared to unprecedented levels in 2007. The trend is not expected to turn around anytime soon as hackers stay a step ahead of security and laptops disappear with sensitive information. Attrition.org, estimates more than 162 million records were compromised through December 21, compared to 49 million last year. (See item 20)

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

Production Industries: Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste;

**Defense Industrial Base; Dams** 

Service Industries: Banking and Finance; Transportation; Postal and Shipping;

**Information Technology; Communications; Commercial Facilities** 

Sustenance and Health: Agriculture and Food; Water; Public Health and Healthcare

Federal and State: Government Facilities; Emergency Services; National Monuments and

**Icons** 

### **Energy Sector**

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: <u>Physical:</u> ELEVATED,

Cyber: ELEVATED

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

1. December 31, Associated Press – (Missouri) Missouri mandates ethanol in gasoline. A law taking effect Tuesday makes Missouri the third state to implement a wide-ranging ethanol mandate. Because the corn-based fuel is cheaper than gasoline, most of Missouri's gas stations quietly made the switch to ethanol months in advance. Ethanol-blended gasoline has become increasingly common nationwide. Part of the reason rests with a federal standard for alternative-fuel production. More than half the states have

joined the federal government in offering incentives to ethanol producers or retailers. As it burns cleaner than petroleum, ethanol-blended gasoline is the norm in numerous cities facing Environmental Protection Agency mandates to improve their air quality.

Source: <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-">http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-</a>

dyn/content/article/2007/12/31/AR2007123100324.html

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### **Chemical Industry Sector**

2. December 30, Associated Press – (Missouri) DNR tackles two chemical spills in **Missouri.** The Missouri Department of Natural Resources spent much of Friday overseeing the cleanup of two chemical spills in southern parts of the state. In Joplin, a malfunctioning valve at a state transportation storage complex released 6,000 gallons of a road deicing chemical. Meanwhile, workers were trying to contain 150 gallons of diesel fuel and paint that had flowed from a tractor trailer and into a creek on the border of Cape Girardeau and Perry counties. Neither spill was expected to be a public health hazard. However, officials were monitoring the Cape Girardeau spill for signs it was endangering aquatic life in the creek. That spill had the added wrinkle that the department was not alerted until several hours after it had happened. The department said about 100 gallons of paint and about 50 gallons of diesel fuel spilled from a tractortrailer during the offloading of paint early Thursday morning. The fuel and paint flowed into a tributary of Apple Creek, affecting about a mile of the waterway. The department was not notified until Thursday afternoon, said a spokesman for the DNR's Field Services Division. "We want to be notified much sooner than 12 hours after the event." the spokesman said, adding that it is possible the extent of the spill was hidden by darkness. The Missouri State Highway Patrol was the first to respond to the spill and work crews with the state Department of Transportation spent part of Thursday trying to contain the spill.

Source:

http://www.newstribune.com/articles/2007/12/30/news\_state/001state11spills.txt

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

3. December 30, Journal News – (New York) Nuclear waste transfer at Indian Point set to begin after delay. The transfer of spent nuclear fuel rods to dry-cask storage at Indian Point 2 was delayed due to a problem with a crane. The moving of three dozen assemblies to 180-ton-casks was scheduled to begin Friday night, but was postponed Saturday afternoon when workers had trouble with the switch that sets the crane's height, said a spokeswoman for Entergy Nuclear, the company that operates the site. It is the first time Indian Point crews will transport spent nuclear fuel rods to storage to make room for new fuel, which is used to produce electricity. The 12-hour process begins with a crane carefully lifting the rods, which contain plutonium and uranium 238, from the deep pools of water where the radioactive material is cooled. The water is drained and the rods are placed inside helium-filled casks suitable to house the waste. Those casks

are then transported to vaults that sit on a 100-foot-wide, 200-foot-long concrete pad. Indian Point was required to conduct a series of training runs before the procedure, according to a spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The new cask storage may also eventually allow workers to drain the fuel waste pool that is leaking radioactive strontium 90 at the inoperable Indian Point 1.

 $\underline{\text{http://www.thejournalnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071230/NEWS02/71230}}{0356}$ 

- 4. December 29, Daily Press (Virginia) \$2.5 million security project nearly complete. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is finishing a \$2.5 million project to update radiation detectors at the Virginia Port Authority's three Hampton Roads terminals, a project that port officials say will help improve efficiency and security at the ports. The detectors, positioned near exit lanes at each terminal, scan all imported cargo containers shipped out of the ports for radiation. Elevated levels of radiation could indicate the presence of a nuclear bomb or other explosive device. Customs is replacing many of the terminals' existing scanners with more modernized equipment and updating other equipment with new technology. The update was required by a congressional mandate. The busiest U.S. ports must scan all incoming cargo for radiation by the end of the year. Scanning all containers greatly reduces the chance a terrorist could hide dangerous materials inside a normal-looking container, port officials said.

  Source: http://www.dailypress.com/business/dp-biz\_sensors\_1229dec29,0,435843.story
- 5. December 29, Centre Daily Times (Pennsylvania) Penn State reactor in compliance. Operations at the Breazeale Nuclear Reactor were in full compliance with regulatory guidelines both before and after a small water leak was detected there, a federal inspection has concluded. Penn State, which owns and operates the research device, will face no enforcement action from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, an NRC spokesman said Friday. "We did not see any breakdowns in their programs," an NRC spokesman said. "We also found that once they did identify some leakage, they actively pursued the source ... and went about repairing it in a very timely manner." The NRC launched the inspection after Penn State reported the leak in October. Workers realized October 9 that roughly 10 gallons an hour were escaping from the 71,000-gallon water pool that holds the reactor.

Source: http://www.centredaily.com/news/local/story/301946.html

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### **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

6. December 31, Los Angeles Times – (National) Boeing satellites coming around. Boeing Co.'s satellite-making complex in El Segundo, California, received a boost last week when it won a U.S. government contract potentially worth \$1.2 billion. The NASA contract, though not huge by industry standards, marked a major milestone for a company recovering from a \$1 billion debacle that led to 3,000 job cuts. Once the world's largest satellite-makers, Boeing began scaling back its El Segundo operations four years ago after technical glitches led to delays and expensive repairs to its satellites.

At the same time, the commercial satellite market shrank, and the company took \$1.1 billion in pretax charges to its earnings in 2003. Now, Boeing is looking forward to what could be its busiest year in a decade. Four Boeing satellites were launched in 2007, up from two in 2004, and eight are slated for takeoff in 2008. The backlog of orders is 27; each satellite can take as many as 18 months to build and cost about \$400 million. Boeing beat out Northrop Grumman Corp. for the NASA contract, which is for up to four tracking and data-relay satellites. They allow the space agency to communicate with the space shuttle and other spacecraft. Among the biggest coming competitions are the rights to build the Pentagon's next-generation space-based communication network, known as the transformational satellite communications system. That contract, which might be awarded in spring, could be worth \$12 billion initially, potentially rising to \$25 billion, though analysts expect Congress to scale back the project. Boeing is competing against Lockheed Martin Corp., the nation's largest defense company, for the contract. Source: <a href="http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/chimon boeing 1231dec31,0,3405635.story?track=rss">http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/chimon boeing 1231dec31,0,3405635.story?track=rss</a>

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### **Banking and Finance Sector**

7. December 29, KDVR 31 – (Colorado) Local bank customers targeted in computer scam. Lakewood-based Jeffco Credit Union is alerting members that the credit union is among various financial institutions being targeted by a widespread phishing scam. Many members have reported suspicious emails and phone calls trying to get personal information from customers in an apparent effort to steal from them. The scam has targeted Jeffco Credit Union members as well as other credit unions and banks locally and regionally.

Source:

 $\frac{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3\&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3.2.1}{\text{http://www.myfoxcolorado.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=5344775\&version=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTY\&pageId=3&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTX\&pageId=1&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTX\&pageId=1&locale=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTX\&pageId=EN-US\&layoutCode=TSTX\&pageId=EN-US\&layoutCode=EN-US\&layoutCode=EN-US\&layoutCode=EN-US\&layoutCode=EN-US\&layoutCode=EN-US\&layoutCode=$ 

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## **Transportation Sector**

- 8. **December 31**, **PCWorld** (National) **U.S bans spare lithium batteries from checked baggage.** New rules will go into effect January 1, 2008 that prohibit air passenger in the U.S from carrying spare lithium batteries in their checked baggage. The U.S Department of Transportation announced these new rules on Friday with the intent of reducing the risk of fires on aircraft. Passengers will be able to carry lithium batteries in checked bags if they are already installed in devices such as laptops or digital cameras. The rules also limit each passenger to two "extended life" lithium batteries. Source: <a href="http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,140909-c,batteries/article.html#">http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,140909-c,batteries/article.html#</a>
- 9. December 30, KITV 4 Honolulu (Hawaii) Man arrested, charged after guns found at airport. A man was arrested Saturday night after he tried to board a plane at Honolulu's airport to the mainland with two fully-loaded guns. The individual had

hidden the semi-automatics in his luggage and refused to tell officers why. TSA security said they found a .45 handgun and a .9 mm semi-automatic weapon. Both guns were loaded and concealed in his packed clothes, officials said. The TSA in Washington told KITV that this was a good example of how TSA works with local law enforcement to provide airport security.

Source: http://www.kitv.com/news/14947035/detail.html

10. December 30, Associated Press – (Missouri) United plane evacuated after taking wrong turn on runway. United Airlines is working to find flights for more than 180 passengers after the flight they were on took a wrong turn on the runway and became stuck in the mud. A spokesman for Kansas City International Airport says no one was injured, and that all 182 passengers had to be taken by bus back to the terminal. The spokesman says Flight 183 bound for Denver was taxiing to the runway under foggy conditions when it turned early onto an access road, which was not wide enough. The plane's nose gear and right main gear went into the mud.

Source: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,319057,00.html

11. *December 30, KGW 8* – (Oregon) **Max service disrupted after suspicious device found.** Max service was disrupted Sunday after the bomb squad was called in to investigate a suspicious device. A trimet operator found the device after pulling into the Hatfield/Government Center Station in Hillsboro, Oregon. The operator reported finding an object wrapped in plastic and duct tape, measuring about a foot in length and two to three inches in diameter on the floor of the train. The object was later determined to be two aerosol cans of pesticide taped together to look like a bomb. The max station was evacuated of all trimet employees, riders, and passengers while the bomb squad investigated.

Source: <a href="http://www.kgw.com/news-">http://www.kgw.com/news-</a>

local/stories/kgw 123007 news max bomb scare.690e49de.html

12. December 29, Associated Press – (Florida) Plane makes emergency landing in Florida. A jetliner flying from Atlanta to Mexico made an emergency landing in Florida on Saturday after crew members smelled smoke in the cockpit. After landing at Tallahassee Regional Airport, the 141 passengers on Delta Air Lines Flight 289 boarded another plane to Cozumel. Firefighters checked the plane with thermal-imaging equipment, but did not find any hot spots, said the airport's assistant superintendent of operations.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071230/ap\_on\_re\_us/brf\_emergency\_landing;\_ylt=ArvIK\_fnMzwsMbN8\_VmNKsmpG2ocA

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# Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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### **Agriculture and Food Sector**

- 13. December 31, News & Observer (North Carolina) N.C. leads fight to stop tainted food. In a push to find problems before they harm consumers, inspectors with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture have been routinely monitoring imported candy, seafood, dry spices, and nearly a dozen other imported and domestically produced products on grocery shelves. The program, started in 2005, is one reason North Carolina was recently asked to join four other states in helping the U.S. Food and Drug Administration develop a better system for ensuring the safety of the nation's food supply. State and local agencies conduct about 80 percent of food safety inspections nationally, but the frequency and quality of such checks vary greatly from state to state. Most products check out, but since starting its surveillance program in 2005, the state has found staphylococcus, E. coli, and salmonella bacteria in soft cheeses, undeclared allergens in imported raisins, and illegal antibiotics in foreign-raised fish.

  Source: http://www.newsobserver.com/news/health\_science/story/853527.html
- 14. *December 30, All Headline News* (National) **Louisiana oysters contaminated with norovirus, FDA warns.** The Food and Drug Administration warned consumers Saturday against eating oysters harvested from a part of West Karako Bay in Louisiana for possible contamination of the norovirus. In an advisory, the FDA said customers must particularly avoid mussels harvested between December 3 and December 21 from growing area 3 of the bay. Very young children and the elderly and people with weakened immune systems are more vulnerable to norovirus, also known as Norwalk. At least seven victims have been reported after eating oysters at a Tennessee restaurant. The mussels were confirmed to have been harvested from West Karako Bay and shipped by Prestige Oyster Company of Theriot, Louisiana.

Source: http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7009574757

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### **Water Sector**

15. December 30, Associated Press – (Georgia) Rain saves Atlanta from drought record. Rain fell in Atlanta for a fourth consecutive day Sunday, assuring that 2007 would not go down as the driest year on record for the drought-stricken Atlanta area. More than one-third of the Southeast is in a severe drought. The Atlanta area, with a population of 5 million, is in the middle of the affected region, which includes most of Tennessee, Alabama, North and South Carolina, as well as parts of Kentucky and Virginia. The latest rain had only a small effect on the metropolitan area's main source of drinking water, Lake Lanier, where the receding water is exposing roads and the foundations of buildings submerged since the reservoir was created in the 1950s.

http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iYOMIAzXREFVjcYtNagkheasCXwAD8TS6FGO0

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### **Public Health and Healthcare Sector**

16. December 31, Sun Star – (International) WHO: No human-to-human transmission of bird flu virus. The World Health Organization has clarified recent reports that there was confirmed human-to-human transmission of the H5N1 avian influenza or bird flu in Pakistan. In its December 27, 2007 health update, the WHO, through its website <a href="www.who.int">www.who.int</a>, explained that the first case of human infection with the influenza has been confirmed in Pakistan. However, the WHO pointed out that the preliminary risk assessment found no evidence of sustained or community human-to-human transmission of the virus.

Source:

http://www.sunstar.com.ph/static/pam/2007/12/31/news/who.no.human.to.human.transmission.of.bird.flu.virus.html

17. December 30, USA Today – (International) Bird flu still a threat 10 years after leap to humans. 10 years ago the virus known as H5N1 jumped from poultry to people for the first time, but it has not yet changed in a way that would allow it to spread easily from person to person. But health experts say the danger has not diminished. "It is still a threat as long as we have transmission in poultry," says a flu expert from the University of Michigan. "We have absolutely no precedent of having had this transmit in the bird population in so many different places, and having, almost every week, reports of another human case." In 1997, officials in Hong Kong, hoping to stamp out the virus, ordered all chickens in the territory, more than 1 million, to be slaughtered. That action appeared to work, and the virus receded, but it re-emerged in China in 2003 and began to spread. Scientists are monitoring strains of the ever-evolving virus so if it does become easily contagious, pandemic preparations can move into high gear. "The risk continues, people continue to be infected, we've had new countries affected and the mortality rate is higher than 60%," a medical epidemiologist with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says. Though human infection with H5N1 is rare, especially compared with seasonal flu that causes 36,000 deaths each year in the USA. he says, "the pandemic threat is ongoing."

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2007-12-30-bird-flu-threat N.htm?csp=34

18. December 29, Bellingham Herald – (Washington) Stores may have sold diseased birds. A Bellingham, Washington, pet store may have sold birds that were infected with a disease that can be passed to humans. Some birds shipped by a national distributor tested positive for avian chlamydiosis, a bird disease that can cause psittacosis when contracted by humans. Twenty PetSmart stores in the state received birds from the vendor. PetSmart has removed all the birds supplied by the vendor and is treating its sick and exposed birds with antibiotics, according to the news release. The birds may have been sold since October. There have been no reports of humans contracting the disease thus far.

Source: http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/2004098048 birds29m.html

### **Government Facilities Sector**

Nothing to report.

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### **Emergency Services Sector**

19. December 30, Pantagraph Publishing – (Illinois) Educators training students how to manage disasters, emergencies. An associate professor with Northern Illinois University's Department of Technology and an assistant professor want to purchase the body of an airplane to teach students how to effectively handle disasters and emergencies in a productive, methodical manner. "You can't manage what you don't know," the associate professor said. "If you don't have the equipment, it's hard to train your people. You want to expose students to as many learning opportunities as possible." NIU is one of eight Illinois universities offering certificates for completing classes involving skills that can be used to mitigate homeland security emergencies. Between terrorist attacks and natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and wildfires in southern California, the need has grown for people familiar with the proper way to manage an array of disasters. The two professors from NIU have students study natural disasters and terrorist attacks to show that while disasters might differ in size, scope, and circumstance, all call for a level of strict organization, confident decision-making, and cooperation among different specialists.

Source:

 $\underline{http://www.pantagraph.com/articles/2007/12/31/news/doc47786b6a9b3c0344061161.txt}$ 

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## **Information Technology**

20. December 31, Associated Press – (National) Personal data theft reaches unprecedented levels in 2007. The loss or theft of personal data such as credit card and Social Security numbers soared to unprecedented levels in 2007, and the trend is not expected to turn around anytime soon as hackers stay a step ahead of security and laptops disappear with sensitive information. And while companies, government agencies, schools and other institutions are spending more to protect ever-increasing volumes of data with more sophisticated firewalls and encryption, the investment often is too little too late. "More of them are experiencing data breaches, and they're responding to them in a reactive way, rather than proactively looking at the company's security and seeing where the holes might be," said the founder of the San Diego-based Identity Theft Resource Center after becoming an identity theft victim herself. Attrition.org, estimates more than 162 million records were compromised through December 21, compared to 49 million last year.

Source: http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,319117,00.html

21. December 31, Computer World – (National) Microsoft patch puts up stop sign for some IE users. Microsoft Corp. acknowledged on December 18 that a software patch

issued earlier in the month for Internet Explorer had crippled the Web browser for some users. After initially suggesting a work-around that required changes to the Windows registry on PCs, the company released an automated fix for the problem. But it did not reissue the patch with the fix included. The IE program manager at the Microsoft Security Response Center (MSRC), said the problem affects IE6 users whose PCs are running Windows XP with the Service Pack 2 update installed. On such systems, the browser "may stop responding when you try to a visit a Web site," the manager explained.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=spam malware and vulnerabilities&articleId=309832&taxonomyId=85

#### **Internet Alert Dashboard**

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="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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### **Communications Sector**

22. December 30, PC World – (National) The year of the new mobile operating system. 2007 could be called the year of the mobile operating system. In 2007, Apple introduced the iPhone, which runs its own brand of smartphone software, and Google announced that it will introduce its operating system platform next year. The entrance of two new operating systems from well-known brands shakes up the plans of some mobile operators, creates headaches for end users, presents bigger challenges for application developers and indicates some fundamental changes in the mobile industry. Source: <a href="http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,140666-c,nonwindowsoss/article.html">http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,140666-c,nonwindowsoss/article.html</a>

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# **Commercial Facilities Sector**

23. December 29, Associated Press – (California) Protesters plan to make a stink at Rose Parade. This year at the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California, demonstrators promise to raise issues. For instance, human rights advocates plan to protest a float honoring the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, and anti-war activists, including "Peace Mom" Cindy Sheehan, intend to rally for peace. Chinese Americans who claim they were victims of political or religious persecution in China are criticizing the \$400,000 Beijing Olympics float. Sheehan, the outspoken San Francisco Bay area activist whose son was killed in Iraq, is campaigning for Congress against the current speaker of the House and calling for the impeachment of the President and Vice President. She will join other pro-impeachment and anti-war groups at the parade, according to her sister. As many as 1,000 supporters are expected to rally before and

after the parade and distribute 20,000 pamphlets while flying 300 banners along the parade route, said the executive director of the Los Angeles National Impeachment Center. Police said they were prepared for the protesters and the hundreds of thousands of spectators. As usual, about 1,200 officers from a number of agencies are set to be on hand. "We've had to ramp up our resources, police personnel, but nothing out of the ordinary," the police commander said.

Source: <a href="http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,318999,00.html">http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,318999,00.html</a>

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### **National Monuments & Icons Sector**

24. December 30, Associated Press – (National) Smugglers making desert research risky. Across the southwestern U.S. border and in northern Mexico, scientists say their work is increasingly threatened by smugglers as tighter border security pushes trafficking into the most remote areas, many of them national parks, where botanists, zoologists, and geologists do their research. "In the last year, it's gotten much worse," said a researcher, who uses infrared cameras to study endangered jaguars in eastern Arizona. He loses one or two of the cameras every month to smugglers. Scientists, especially those working on the Mexican side of the border, have long shared the wilderness with marijuana growers and immigrants trying to enter the United States illegally. But tension is rising because of crackdowns on smugglers by the Mexican military, increased vigilance in the Caribbean Sea, new border fences, air patrols, a buildup of U.S. Border Patrol agents, and a turf war between cartels. Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument stopped granting most new research permits in January because of increasing smuggling activity. Scientists must sign a statement acknowledging that the National Park Service cannot guarantee their safety from "potentially dangerous persons entering the park from Mexico." Huge swaths of northeastern Mexico are now off-limits to science, said a professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico.

Source: http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/12/30/tech/main3656851.shtml

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### **Dams Sector**

25. December 31, Providence Business News – (Rhode Island) Will dam regulations hold water? With 674 dams to inspect throughout the state, the one dam inspector with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management is busy – too overworked to properly check them all. That is why the DEM on December 20 put in place regulations that will change the way those dams are inspected. Now, for the first time, most will be inspected by private and municipal owners. The DEM dam inspector will continue to inspect 210 dams, including the "high-hazard" dams. Every five years, he will also inspect "significant-hazard" dams. Many of the dams in those two categories have not been properly maintained through the years, the DEM said in announcing the new regulations. Inspection of "low-hazard" dams, along with the high- and significant-hazard dams that the DEM dam inspector does not have time to inspect, will now be the responsibility of the owners, who can hire consulting firms for about \$3,000.

Source: http://www.pbn.com/stories/28947.html

26. December 30, Associated Press – (International) Neighbors wary of China's Three **Gorges Dam.** For millions of Chinese living along the reservoir's shores, the Three Gorges Dam that the government said would give them a new life is stirring fresh concern. Four years after the waters began rising in the 410 mile-long reservoir, villagers tell of warped foundations and fissures snaking along the earth. Pollution in the once fast-running river is building in the turbid reservoir. Landslides, common in the rainy region, are occurring more frequently. Even a few officials are breaking ranks to predict catastrophe. Toxic algae is blooming, feeding off industrial waste and sewage and tainting water supplies. Experts have warned that the waters in the enormous reservoir are undermining hillsides. Water seeps into loosely packed soil and rocks, making them heavier and wetter, and can trigger landslides on steep slopes like those rising from the Yangtze. Additionally, the huge weight of the water on the rock bed exerts a pressure that can lead to earthquakes. "The ecological situation in Three Gorges areas is worse than I expected," said a professor with the Institute of Mountain Hazards and the Environment at the government-backed Chinese Academy of Sciences. He ticked off a list of worries — tremors, erosion, and pollution — and said the social impact was equally grave. Effects of the rising waters have become apparent in recent years, residents say. Roads are split and buckled and need regular repair. Dilapidated buildings sit abandoned, while red-and-white signs warning of landslides are everywhere.

Source: <a href="http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22441313/">http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/22441313/</a>

27. December 30, North Jersey – (New Jersey) Pompton Lakes demands action on dam gates. In New Jersey, local officials are pressing state and federal agencies to change the operation of flood control gates on the Pompton Lake dam, which they blame for increased flooding of a neighborhood on Christmas Eve. Residents say water rose and fell several times in the streets, in sequence with the dam gates opening and closing. Borough officials note that a National Weather Service chart for December 24 showed water levels just below the dam bobbed up and down repeatedly, rising above flood stage, dropping 5 to 6 feet, and then shooting upward again. Local officials are unhappy with responses from the state Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which installed the floodgates to alleviate flooding upstream in Oakland.

Source:

http://www.northjersey.com/page.php?qstr=eXJpcnk3ZjczN2Y3dnFlZUVFeXk0NSZmZ2JlbDdmN3ZxZWVFRXI5NzIzOTc3NiZ5cmlyeTdmNzE3Zjd2cWVlRUV5eTM=

28. **December 29**, **Telegram & Gazette** – (Massachusetts) **Hole in Lovell's dam prompts quick shutdown.** In Massachusetts, a water main break in the massive Lovell Reservoir dam has led the city to take a major source of its drinking water offline. The damage was called minor and the site deemed stable yesterday. An approximately 10-foot hole was discovered Thursday morning at the base of the downstream side of the dam, which is more than 75 feet tall. Workers noticed discoloration in the neighboring Falulah Reservoir that was believed to have been caused by silt coming through the dam.

Inspectors from city and state agencies, along with engineering consultants, determined that the damage to the dam's embankment was minor, and the site was stabilized, according to the mayor. The issue appears to be a broken pipe inside the dam, but excavation will be needed to assess the scope of the problems. Rocky fill was used to patch the hole as a temporary measure and crews kept vigil at the dam overnight. Crews also will be monitoring the site this weekend. A spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection said yesterday that inspections by the state Department of Conservation and Recreation's Office of Dam Safety found the structure had not been compromised by the leak.

Source: http://www.telegram.com/article/20071229/NEWS/712290336/1008/NEWS02

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