



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 21 February 2008

Current Nationwide



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- According to the WCVB 5 Boston, There are new concerns about the safety of the Ted Williams Tunnel in Boston, Massachusetts, because inspectors cannot reach thousands of epoxy bolts to ensure their strength. NewsCenter 5 reported that the issue is slowing safety inspections inside the tunnel. Inspectors are supposed to routinely check the ceiling bolts to make sure they are holding, but about 4,000 of the bolts cannot be seen because they are out of view. (See item [10](#))
- The Los Angeles Times reports a cat-and-mouse game is portrayed by past and current inspectors, lawmakers, and an audit report that says the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety Inspection Service is easy to bypass and was failing to screen potentially sick cattle long before this week's beef recall, the largest in U.S. history. (See item [17](#))

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: **Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED**

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

1. *February 20, Associated Press* – (National) **Companies consider ethanol pipeline from Iowa.** Iowa could be home to an ethanol pipeline. Two companies are exploring the possibility of building a pipeline to carry ethanol from northwest Iowa to the East

Coast. Magellan Midstream Partners of Oklahoma and Pennsylvania-based Buckeye Partners have announced a joint assessment of the project, which would cost more than \$3 billion. Ethanol is not shipped via gasoline pipelines because of concerns the alcohol would corrode the pipes and absorb water. The plan faces several hurdles, including a government loan guarantee to make it financially feasible. The proposal tentatively calls for sites in Iowa, Indiana, and Ohio. The pipeline could carry more than ten million gallons of ethanol a day.

Source: <http://www.whotv.com/global/story.asp?s=7897686>

2. *February 20, Portage Daily Register* – (Wisconsin) **Pipeline work resumes after fatal accident.** Work on an oil pipeline that stopped following a fatal accident over the weekend resumed Tuesday after a site visit from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). An accident Saturday morning in Columbus, Wisconsin, killed an employee of Welded Construction. He died when the trackhoe he was operating overturned and crushed him. Work near the site where the employee died did not resume, but all other work was restarted Tuesday. Welded Construction is one of the four firms that make up the Global Pipeline Partners, which is the local contractor for Enbridge Energy Inc. A Global Pipeline spokesman said OSHA representatives visited the site Tuesday and interviewed workers, but he would not comment further on the accident until the OSHA investigation is finished.

Source: <http://www.wiscnews.com/pdr/news//index.php?ntid=273338>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Chemical Industry Sector

3. *February 20, Sun Media and CP* – (International) **Air sample brings toxic results.** A native community in Sarnia's Chemical Valley, Canada, is calling for government help and stronger industry standards in the wake of new test results showing high levels of five toxic chemicals in the air. An air sample from Aamjiwnaang First Nation sent to a U.S. lab for testing contained levels of benzene, chlorobenzene, chloromethane, ethylbenzene and isoprene that exceed U.S. health guidelines and industry standards, said the chairperson of the reserve's environment committee. The committee could not compare the results to Canadian limits because there are no federal or provincial standards for the chemicals. They have, however, been linked to serious health problems. The community hopes the test results will convince the governments to tighten chemical standards, especially when people live near large industrial facilities, said an official, who helped conduct the test. The community has drawn international attention in recent years, after a study of babies born over a five-year period found that girls outnumbered boys by two-to-one, considered a scientific anomaly.

Source: <http://lfpres.ca/newsstand/News/Local/2008/02/20/4860976-sun.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

4. *February 20, Capital-Journal* – (Kansas) **Wolf Creek employees reach safety**

milestone. Wolf Creek Generating Station employees last month surpassed eight million hours worked without a lost-time accident, dating back to December 2003. The Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation operates Kansas' only nuclear power plant, Wolf Creek Generating Station, near Burlington.

Source: http://cjonline.com/stories/022008/bre_safety.shtml

5. *February 20, Palm Beach Post* – (Florida) **Officials test readiness for nuclear emergency.** Palm Beach County emergency responders met Wednesday at the Emergency Operations Center west of West Palm Beach to simulate the response to a fire at the St. Lucie nuclear power plant on Hutchinson Island in St. Lucie County, Florida. FEMA evaluators were also present to judge the response. As part of an annual exercise, the St. Lucie County Department of Public Safety and Martin County Department of Emergency Services sounded the outdoor warning sirens for the nuclear plant between 8 a.m. and noon Wednesday. The siren sounding involved a one-minute sounding of all 90 sirens within the ten-mile St. Lucie Emergency Planning Zone. Before and after the sirens sound, a message is broadcasted on the sirens' public address system stating: "This is only a test." At the end of the final test announcement there is a ten-second wail of the sirens. In the unlikely event of an actual emergency at the nuclear plant, the sirens would sound for a five-minute period. This would be followed by official instructions and another five-minute sounding of the siren system. Detailed instructions for the general population would begin being broadcast over local radio and television stations. Emergency responders staged a mock nuclear disaster in Brevard County, Florida, Monday afternoon. Brevard's emergency response teams practice every year on such drills, demonstrating their skills and knowledge of protocol in a disaster to state and federal emergency management officials. Every two years they run a live exercise like the one Monday, taking mock victims through the paces. If a real nuclear disaster occurred, about 200,000 people within ten miles of the plant would be evacuated to counties north and south, Brevard County's emergency management director said.

Source:

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/storm/content/local_news/epaper/2008/02/20/0220drill.html

See also: <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2008/feb/20/warning-sirens-sounding-today-are-only-test/>; and:

<http://www.floridatoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080219/NEWS01/802190333&template=palmbay>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Defense Industrial Base Sector

6. *February 20, Associated Press* – (National) **Clothing IDs friends for military.** When Taliban forces attacked a police checkpoint in central Afghanistan under dark of night in late 2006, a special-operations master sergeant called in air support and then slapped a high-tech cloth-like device on his helmet for protection. Fresh from labs at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the device transmitted light from a powerful light-emitting diode that pulsed through a fiber optic bundle, giving off infrared signals visible to

pilots wearing night-vision goggles. The new technology – called Target Recognition Operator Notification system – was designed to easily identify friendly forces and avoid casualties from friendly fire. The sergeant said it is better than strobe lights, which can be mistaken for machine-gun fire, or reflective tape, which is difficult to see from the air. Built in to the nylon-like cloth are a circuit board and a battery pack. The woven nature of the cloth emits light in a controlled way, creating a uniform surface. The system can run 200 hours on two double-A batteries and weighs less than three ounces. It can be worn on tactical vests, around an arm, or mounted to a helmet. The circuitry also allows the system to flash at different speeds, enabling pilots to identify different groups of friendly forces. A support contractor at the Air Force Research Lab said he would like to see the system in the hands of all U.S. forces in the battlefield and become standard equipment in air-crew survival kits. He said researchers are working to upgrade the system so it will transmit light in other parts of the spectrum, making it more difficult for enemy forces to detect with conventional night vision technology.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080220/ap_on_re_us/friendly_fiber;_ylt=AmZUSxXB2LATXeHCygh5z9G2ocA

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Banking and Finance Sector

7. *February 20, Washington Post* – (District of Columbia) **Tab in scam at tax office in D.C. nears \$50 million.** Federal authorities think that nearly \$50 million was stolen in an embezzlement scheme run out of the D.C. tax office, more than double the amount they had previously uncovered, four sources close to the investigation said. The corruption at the D.C. Office of Tax and Revenue went undetected much longer than initially thought, the sources said, extending back almost 20 years. In addition to tracking the missing money, authorities are looking into gifts suspected of being provided to co-workers and others by the woman accused of leading the scam, a former tax office manager. Since the woman was arrested in November, authorities have issued subpoenas for financial records, interviewed dozens of witnesses and built a more complete picture of what happened, the sources said. Prosecutors told a judge, soon after the suspect was arrested, that they had confirmed she had helped steal \$20 million in fraudulent refund checks since 2004. But the estimated losses have been growing as federal investigators have delved further into records at the Office of Tax and Revenue and found dozens more fraudulent checks made out to city employees. Sources said that the total is nearing \$50 million. The scheme is the largest corruption case in the city's history.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/19/AR2008021902928.html?hpid=moreheadlines>

8. *February 20, Quad-City Times* – (Iowa, Illinois) **Scammers spread wide net in Q-C.** Internet scams, or phishing, continues to be a problem in the Quad-City region. In recent weeks, IH Mississippi Valley Credit Union members in the Quad-City region have been the target of several scams originating in Korea. In each instance, members and staff were quick to alert customers, said the vice president of marketing for the

credit union. One scam warned customers that the credit union had suspended their accounts. Another focused on trying to acquire members' debit card numbers. That fraudulent e-mail sought confidential information from credit union members by offering members between \$50 and \$80 for taking an online survey. The union official said the credit union contracted with a fraud specialist to deal with the scams. The fraudulent e-mails were generated internationally from Korea, and the specialist was able to shut down the bogus Web site, she said. Another e-mail scam circulating last week targeted customers of Wells Fargo Bank. In those e-mails, people were told that there was an "unidentified money transfer" in their online accounts, that Wells Fargo's online security team had suspended their online banking service, and that the accounts needed to be updated.

Source:

<http://www.qctimes.com/articles/2008/02/20/news/business/doc47b9fa74e2ea3183479332.txt>

9. *February 20, DOW JONES/Associated Press* – (New York) **Ex-Refco chief faces civil fraud charges.** The Securities and Exchange Commission filed civil fraud charges on Tuesday against a former chief executive of the commodities broker Refco Inc., days after he pleaded guilty to criminal charges in a scheme to mask the company's financial health. The lawsuit, filed in Federal District Court in Manhattan, contends that he orchestrated a plan to hide hundreds of millions of dollars owed to Refco by a private entity he controlled and to use practices that artificially inflated Refco's results. Late Friday, the suspect pleaded guilty to a 20-count criminal indictment, including charges of conspiracy, securities fraud, bank fraud and making false filings with the S.E.C. The suspect, a British citizen, faces life in prison on the criminal charges under federal sentencing guidelines.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/20/business/20refco.html?ref=business>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Transportation Sector

10. *February 20, WCVB 5 Boston* – (Massachusetts) **Strength of some big dig tunnel bolts can't be checked.** There are new concerns about the safety of the Ted Williams Tunnel in Boston, Massachusetts, because inspectors cannot reach thousands of epoxy bolts to ensure their strength. NewsCenter 5 reported that the issue is slowing safety inspections inside the tunnel. Inspectors are supposed to routinely check the ceiling bolts to make sure they are holding, but about 4,000 of the bolts cannot be seen because they are out of view. Similar epoxy bolts slipped loose in July 2006, causing the ceiling collapse that killed a Jamaica Plain woman. Since that collapse, the 16,000 bolts inside the tunnel are supposed to be inspected regularly. According to a story in Wednesday's Boston Herald, officials must now determine whether the tunnel needs to be retrofitted and how much that would cost. There have already been numerous costly mistakes on the Big Dig project putting its price tag at nearly \$15 billion.

Source: <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/15351320/detail.html>

11. *February 20, Missoulian* – (Montana) **Airport mulls private security.** Missoula

International Airport in Montana plans to discuss this week whether to have a private company staff its security checkpoint rather than the federal government. The Transportation Security Administration has contracted with private security companies to screen passengers and luggage at a few of the nation's airports since 2002, but government officials recently asked Montana airports to consider making the switch sooner rather than later to save some money. The state's seven commuter airports -- located in Glasgow, Sydney, Havre, Lewistown, Miles City, Glendive and Wolf Point -- have no security. Only a handful of airports nationwide have chosen to go with private firms. Many airports have taken the if-it's-not-broken-don't-fix-it attitude. Missoula, on the other hand, is weighing the benefits of such a proposal. The switch could potentially save the airport \$90,000. Missoula's airport has about 40 TSA employees. They could either join the new private company once it is chosen or transfer to a new airport if they would like to remain federal employees. The airport has little say in who the federal government hires to run its security.

Source: <http://www.missoulain.com/articles/2008/02/20/news/mtregional/news08.txt>

12. *February 19, KITV 4 Hawaii* – (Hawaii) **FAA investigates whether pilots fell asleep during flight.** The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating whether two go! Airlines pilots fell asleep during an inter-island flight. The incident centers on flight 1002, which took off from Honolulu on February 13 and did not land in Hilo when it should have and was out of contact for an extended period of time. The plane reportedly flew beyond Hilo for several miles and was out of contact with air traffic controllers for more than 20 minutes, officials said. "We are aware of the incident and an internal investigation is under way," a go! Airlines counsel said in a written statement. A pilot told KITV one possibility is the crew could have had a radio problem and were unable to receive their assignment by air traffic controllers so they stayed on course until communications were restored. If the pilots were in error, evidence may be found in the cockpit voice recorder, which could indicate if the pilots were sleeping when they should have been talking, the pilot said.

Source: <http://www.kitv.com/news/15347405/detail.html>

13. *February 19, Associated Press* – (Florida) **Plane searched at Fort Lauderdale airport after threat.** Airline officials say a flight from Philadelphia to the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport was searched Tuesday night after a threat was phoned in to a call center. An AirTran Airways spokeswoman says the airline's call center received a "non-specific threat" about Flight 758. She says all luggage was searched, but nothing was found. 88 passengers and five crew members were aboard the flight.

Source:

<http://www.floridatoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080219/BREAKINGNEWS/80219089/1086>

14. *February 19, USA Today* – (National) **Most states give green light to tamper-proof IDs.** Forty-four states are moving ahead to comply with a law requiring more secure driver's licenses, according to the Department of Homeland Security -- despite privacy concerns and worry that the new documents will be too expensive. The department's evidence: Those states have applied for and received extensions to a May 11 deadline

for issuing new tamper-resistant licenses that require proof of citizenship and address. “We expect that states requesting an extension will comply with the law,” a department spokesman says. Residents will have to show the new identification card before boarding a commercial flight or before entering a federal courthouse, among other things. The federal Real ID Act requires states to issue the more secure version of the driver’s license in an effort to make it difficult for criminals and would-be terrorists to get fake licenses. Some states continue to balk at the law. An official with the American Civil Liberties Union, which opposes Real ID and warns that the government will not be able to adequately protect databases of citizens’ personal information, says some states applied for the extension “to run out the clock on the Bush administration.” The Homeland Security policy chief says states have until the end of March to apply for an extension. Otherwise, residents from those states will not be allowed to use their driver’s licenses to fly. The six states that have not yet applied for an extension are: Delaware, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma and South Carolina. The first extension lasts until the end of 2009. If states do nothing, their residents starting on May 11 must use passports to board commercial flights and enter federal buildings or be subjected to extra security checks.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-02-19-RealID_N.htm?csp=15

15. *February 18, ABC 7 Denver* – (Colorado) **TSA pilot programs to beef up security, improve efficiency.** A Transportation Security Administration official toured Denver International Airport with a Colorado representative Monday and announced two pilot programs to improve security and efficiency. One would apply ski slope designations (black diamond, blue square, or green circle) to three security lines in the checkpoint area of the north terminal. Passengers can choose which line to enter based on how fast they think they can get through without slowing down others. The black diamond is for people like business travelers who can zip through without being told to remove shoes, belts and jewelry. The blue square is for regular passengers with a bag or two, and the green circle is for families and people who prefer to take more time getting through security. A similar program is already in operation in Salt Lake City. TSA officials say it seems to be working smoothly. The ski slope designation program begins Wednesday at DIA. The other pilot program will provide for random screening of airport employees.

Source:

<http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/15336974/detail.html?rss=den&psp=news>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Postal and Shipping Sector

16. *February 19, WVIT 30 Hartford* – (Connecticut) **Hartford office quarantined after suspicious package opened.** The 15th floor of a Hartford, Connecticut, building was quarantined after a suspicious package was opened inside Tuesday afternoon. Officials said someone inside a law office opened a package that was described as a box within a box. That employee suffered irritation to the eyes and hands. Two people that were exposed to the package and 13 others were quarantined for a short time, and the building was evacuated as a precaution. Officials have determined that the package does not pose any risk and that there were no powders or residues. Officials with the Department of

Environmental Protection said they were investigating.

Source: <http://www.nbc30.com/news/15344350/detail.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Agriculture and Food Sector

17. *February 20, Los Angeles Times* – (National) **Cattle inspections thwarted.** A cat-and-mouse game is portrayed by past and current inspectors, lawmakers, and an audit report that says the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety Inspection Service is easy to bypass and was failing to screen potentially sick cattle long before this week's beef recall, the largest in U.S. history. A 2006 audit reviewed 12 slaughterhouses and showed that, despite federal regulations banning all cattle that cannot walk from the human food supply, 29 so-called downer animals were slaughtered. Of those, 20 had no documented physical injury that would demonstrate that they were not diseased, according to the report by the USDA's Office of Inspector General. "Should serious animal diseases be detected in the United States, USDA's ability to quickly determine and trace the source of infections to prevent the spread of the disease could be impaired," the audit report says. Shortcomings in the system have come under harsh light in the wake of the recall of 143 million pounds of beef from a Chino, California, slaughterhouse, where an undercover investigator for the Humane Society of the United States chronicled downer cattle being forced into the slaughter line.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-beef20feb20,1,122893.story>

18. *February 20, USAgNet* – (National) **USDA to take closer look at meat plants.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) said Monday that it would step up oversight at 900 slaughterhouses in the U.S. to check for inhumane handling violations like those that led to the biggest meat recall ever on Sunday. Westland/Hallmark Meat of Chino, California, recalled 143 million pounds of beef manufactured over two years after a USDA investigation sparked by abuses uncovered by the Humane Society of the United States. The USDA found that Westland did not always alert federal inspectors when cows that passed an initial USDA inspection became unable to walk before they were slaughtered.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.php?Id=424&yr=2008>

19. *February 19, Associated Press* – (Minnesota) **New case of bovine TB could mean downgrade of Minn.'s status.** Another case of bovine tuberculosis (TB) has been found in a beef cattle herd in Beltrami County, Minnesota. The Minnesota Board of Animal Health says this is the fourth herd since October to test positive for bovine TB. It is the 11th infected herd found in the state since bovine TB was discovered here in 2005. Officials worry the latest case could mean a downgrade of Minnesota's bovine TB status. The U.S. Department of Agriculture prescribes a downgrade when more than three herds are discovered to have bovine TB within a 12 month period. If the downgrade happens, Minnesota cattle would be rated two steps down from the highest level of TB-free. State producers would have to adhere to stricter federal and state testing when shipping cattle or bison.

Source: <http://www.kxmc.com/News/210872.asp>

20. *February 19, Chicago Tribune* – (National) **Cattle industry mixed on USDA tracking plan.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) wants to register each animal and the premises where it was born and raised through its National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Shortly after the discovery in 2003 of mad cow disease in the U.S., the government renewed efforts to establish the system, which will allow authorities to trace animals back to their origins within 48 hours. USDA contends that animal identification is a first line of defense against the uncontrolled spread of diseases. Health officials believe that human consumption of beef from cattle suffering from bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, can lead to a deadly human illness similar to Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, which attacks the nervous system and brain. The program, however, is not on track, primarily because of widespread mistrust of the USDA among cattle producers. After nearly four years, just 440,000 of the nation's 1.4 million cattle operations have signed up so far. Skeptics cite numerous reasons for opposition, from the difficulty of tagging young calves to the more conspiratorial big-brother intrusion of the federal government. They also complain that the plan is redundant, since many states and the USDA already record some information on livestock and where they are raised. The USDA wants all ranches and farms and their cattle registered by 2009. However, after the proposal received an initial cold reception, USDA decided to make the participation voluntary. The program last year picked up some important cattle and dairy industry endorsements, including support from the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, arguably the industry's most influential trade group.

Source: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-animal-identification-feb19,1,3188695.story?page=1>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Water Sector

21. *February 20, Associated Press* – (Colorado) **EPA maps plan to ease Colo. flood threat.** The Environmental Protection Agency said it could be a month or two before crews pump water from a crumbling tunnel in Colorado where officials fear more than a billion gallons of trapped water could cause a potentially catastrophic flood in a historic mining town. EPA officials are scrambling to find a contractor and more than \$4.5 million to pay for the project, said a remedial project manager for the federal agency. Lake County officials declared a state of emergency for fear that melt from record snowfall could add to growing pressure in the tunnel and cause a blowout and flood the town of Leadville, about 85 miles southwest of Denver. The partially collapsed Leadville Mine Drainage Tunnel drains contaminated water from abandoned mines that date back to the 1800s. Federal and state agencies had been working on a plan to drain the tunnel since at least 2003. But the plan to drill into the tunnel and pump water more than a mile to a water treatment plant became bogged down in a bureaucratic quagmire over ownership.

Source:

http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5jZu_kACT9XIYYzSCzey06LvOSSeAD8UTVOK82

22. *February 19, Associated Press* – (Montana; Wyoming) **Court allows Montana suit vs. Wyoming.** The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed Montana to file a lawsuit against Wyoming over water rights in two rivers that flow through both states. Montana wants the court to rule that Wyoming is using too much water from the Tongue and Powder Rivers, while Montana residents are not getting enough water in some dry years. The disagreement is over the Yellowstone River Compact, an agreement the states and North Dakota signed in 1950 spelling out how to share water. Montana argues the compact should require Wyoming to limit water use — including from groundwater pumping. Montana argues that coal-bed methane production in Wyoming, which requires pumping huge quantities of groundwater, makes the situation worse. Wyoming says in response that Montana has failed to show it has been harmed by Wyoming's water use, which is in line with the 1950 agreement.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080219/ap_on_go_su_co/scotus_yellowstone_compact_d_ispute;_ylt=Au9T.yEhm1wmOn1nb_6PMcpMEP0E

23. *February 19, WNCN 17 Raleigh* – (North Carolina) **Army Corps of Engineers: Dam releases down.** With Falls Lake still about eight feet below normal, officials estimate the city has enough water to last till about mid June given current rainfall and usage levels. Tuesday, the Raleigh, North Carolina, City Council learned just what steps are being taken to preserve as much water as possible. On an average day, the dam at Falls Lake releases 35-million gallons of water. The head of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers water control division told the council his agency has cut back releases at the dam by about nine percent. City officials asked the Corps if it could cut even more. Although Raleigh's daily use is down, the city still pulls about 40-million gallons a day from Falls Lake and officials remain concerned. An additional cut in usage occurred today when Holly Springs agreed to go off-line until the drought ends. The town is Raleigh's tenth largest water customer.

Source: <http://www.nbc17.com/midatlantic/ncn/news.apx.-content-articles-NCN-2008-02-19-0031.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Public Health and Healthcare Sector

24. *February 20, Arkansas Democrat Gazette* – (Arkansas) **Arkansas flu cases on rise, fatal to 3.** Health officials have seen a sharp increase in influenza cases over the past few weeks as the flu season climbs. The virus has reached widespread status in 44 states, including Arkansas, where it is present in all of the state's 75 counties. The Arkansas Department of Health on Tuesday reported that three Arkansans – one child and two adults – have died from the flu this season. Ten child-flu deaths have been reported nationwide, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Such figures are considered typical for this time of year, according to health officials. But flu cases are expected to continue to climb. CDC officials announced February 8 that this year's flu vaccine does not combat two strains of the virus most common this year. Seven people died of influenza last year, including two between ages 15 and 24, and five people older than 55. Eleven people died in 2006; 14 in 2005; seven in 2004; and 33 in

2003.

Source: <http://www.nwanews.com/adg/News/217339/>

25. *February 19, Reuters* – (National) **Community-acquired MRSA infection often fatal.** Among people with a methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infection caught in the general community (rather than in the hospital), more than 20 percent were dead within a year, according to new research findings. MRSA infections used to be seen only in hospitalized patients, but nowadays they are occurring more frequently in the general population. A researcher at McGill University Health Center, Montreal, Canada, and colleagues used a UK general practice database to identify 1439 MRSA patients diagnosed in the community from 2001 to 2004. Each patient was compared with up to ten matched patients without a MRSA diagnosis. All of the subjects were older than 18 years of age; the average age was 70 years; and none had been hospitalized within the previous two years. After one year of follow-up, 21.8 percent of MRSA patients had died compared to only five percent of those in the non-MRSA group. The report is in the online medical journal BMC Medicine.
Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSKIM96900420080219>

Government Facilities Sector

26. *February 20, Asia News Network* – (International) **US embassy in Phnom Penh receives terrorist threat.** The U.S. embassy in Cambodia received a terrorist threat, prompting the Cambodian authorities to send police and military police to protect the U.S. embassy and the residence of the ambassador, said a government official. “The threat was made through a message sent to a media company which informed the U.S. embassy on the threat. The U.S. embassy told the authority and we sent our forces to protect the embassy,” the spokesman of the ministry of interior said. “In addition, we also made an investigation and now we know the identity of the suspect,” he added. The U.S. ambassador said that in Cambodia, they feel confident about their security and safety.
Source: http://www.nationmultimedia.com/2008/02/20/regional/regional_30065966.php

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Emergency Services Sector

27. *February 20, Best Syndication* – (California) **9-1-1 Service interrupted on Tuesday.** On Tuesday morning, just before 11 am, 9-1-1 emergency service went down in California’s high desert. From Needles to Pinon Hills to Big Bear and places in between, the interruption lasted through much of the day. Apparently, a construction crew cut a fiber optic cable in the Barstow “area”, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department spokesperson. For a short time Wednesday morning customers experienced a fast busy signal when they dialed 9-1-1. The spokesperson said that Verizon worked “diligently” and was able to forward the calls to the business lines of three affected agencies. Besides those cities previously mentioned, Victorville, Hesperia,

Apple Valley, Phelan, and Barstow were affected by the failure. Small communities in between also lost that service. The offices affected were the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department's Desert Dispatch Center, Barstow Police Department and Barstow CHP office. By 3:45 on Wednesday, Verizon advised the agencies involved that the repairs had been made. The company conducted several tests and confirmed that the 9-1-1 lines were repaired and back in operation.

Source:

http://www.bestsyndication.com/?q=20080219_emergency_medical_services_interrupted_9-1-1_victorville_hesperia_apple_valley_high_desert.htm

28. *February 19, USA Today* – (California) **Report: San Diego failing at fire safety.** The city and county of San Diego, still recovering from deadly wildfires in 2007, have failed to provide adequate fire protection and remain vulnerable to massive damage in the future, according to a report released Tuesday. The study by the San Diego Regional Fire Safety Forum is one of several being conducted as a result of the destructive 2007 fires in San Diego. The report, which was issued by a group of 15 current and former fire professionals, says San Diego needs 50 more fire engines, hire hundreds more firefighters and more retardant-dropping helicopters to attack wildfires in the crucial first 48 hours, before they grow. Most importantly, the report says, a countywide fire department needs to be established to put San Diego on par with the rest of wildfire-vulnerable Southern California. San Diego County, with a population of 3 million and 4,200 square miles of land, has no countywide department. It relies on the city and several regional departments. The report says the lack of a central command “resulted in an uncoordinated effort” against the fires. The report asserts that firefighting officials across California are frustrated by the lack of resources San Diego puts into fire safety.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/weather/wildfires/2008-02-19-sandiego-fire_N.htm?csp=15

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Information Technology

29. *February 20, vnunet.com* – (National) **Hackers step up website attacks.** Trend Micro has warned that hackers are intensifying attacks on legitimate websites to spread malware. The security firm's 2007 Threat Report and 2008 Forecast debunked the myth about “not visiting questionable sites.” But legitimate sites with the latest sports news, or links in a search engine result, could potentially infect visitors with malware. Trend Micro explained that an underground malware industry has carved itself a thriving market by exploiting the trust and confidence of web users. Apple also had to contend with the Zlob gang, proving that even alternative operating systems are not safe havens for the online user. ‘Gromozon’, malware disguised in the form of a rogue anti-spyware security application, also made its mark in 2007. The Storm botnet expanded in scope last year, and Trend Micro researchers found proof that the botnet is renting its services to host fly-by-night online pharmacies, pump-and-dump scams, and even portions of its backend botnet infrastructure. Trend Micro found that nearly 50 percent of all threat infections came from North America last year, but that Asian countries are also experiencing growth. Around 40 percent of infections stem from that region. Social

networking communities and user-created content such as blog sites became infection vectors due to attacks on their underlying web 2.0 technologies, particularly cross-site scripting and streaming. Infection volumes nearly quadrupled between September and November 2007, indicating that malware authors took advantage of the holiday seasons to send spam or deploy spyware while users were shopping online. Based on the emerging trends of this year, Trend Micro forecasts that legacy code used in operating systems and vulnerabilities in popular applications will continue to be attacked in an effort to inject in-process malicious code. High-profile sites will continue to be the most sought-after attack vectors by criminals to host links to phishing and identity theft code. These sites include social networking, banking/financial, online gaming, search engines, travel, commercial ticketing, local government, news, jobs, blogs, and ecommerce sites for auctions and shopping. Communication services such as email, instant messaging and file sharing will continue to be abused by content threats such as image spam and malicious URLs.

Source: <http://www.vnunet.com/vnunet/news/2210040/hackers-step-website-attacks>

30. *February 19, IDG News Service* – (National) **DoS attack prevents access to WordPress.com blogs.** The WordPress.com blog-hosting service suffered a denial-of-service (DoS) attack that began Saturday and was still preventing users from logging in or posting to their blogs on Tuesday. A spokesman for Automattic confirmed that the service experienced a DoS attack with spikes of up to 6 gigabits of incoming traffic, which was making some blogs inaccessible for about five to 15 minutes on Tuesday. Though service had mostly been restored, Automattic, which maintains WordPress.com, was still working on returning service to normal levels on Tuesday afternoon, he said. An employee at a New York-based company said on Tuesday afternoon that users there were unable to log in to their blogs and post comments for “most of the day.” However, the blogs were still able to be viewed publicly. WordPress.com users were notified via e-mail about the DoS attack. In the e-mail, the service provider said that the attack was affecting user log-in and causing some forums to be offline.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=spam_malware_and_vulnerabilities&articleId=9063440&taxonomyId=85

31. *February 19, IDG News Service* – (National) **Microsoft scrambles to quash ‘friendly’ worm story.** Microsoft is moving to counter some scathing comments regarding a security paper authored by researchers at its Cambridge, England, facility. The paper, “Sampling Strategies for Epidemic-Style Information Dissemination,” looks at how worms sometimes inefficiently spread their code. The research explores how a more efficient method could, for example, be used for distributing patches or other software. The advantage would be that patches could be distributed from PC to PC, rather than from a central server. That method would reduce the load on a server, and patches would be distributed faster. But the patches would have the same qualities as a computer worm, a generally malicious file. Since a story about the paper appeared on Thursday in the New Scientist magazine, the paper has been roundly assailed. A Microsoft spokesman said on Monday that the New Scientist story is not inaccurate. In response to the criticism, Microsoft said it does not intend to develop patch worms. The company also

said it will continue to let customers decide how and when they apply security updates.

Source:

http://www.infoworld.com/archives/emailPrint.jsp?R=printThis&A=/article/08/02/19/Microsoft-scrambles-to-quash-friendly-worm-story_1.html

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: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

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

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Communications Sector

32. *February 19, Associated Press* – (National) **FCC must study bird-tower collisions.** On Tuesday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit sided with conservation groups that claimed the Federal Communications Commission violated government rules by approving communications towers that threaten migratory birds. The court is requiring the agency to conduct at least the minimal analysis on the environmental effect of cell, radio, television and other towers built in the Gulf Coast region, as the groups have requested. “This is a significant ruling ... because the D.C. Circuit is directing the FCC for the first time to carefully assess the impact of communication towers on birds,” said an attorney with Earthjustice, a public interest law firm, which represented the American Bird Conservancy Inc. and Forest Conservation Council. The groups want the FCC to assess the 6,000 towers in the Gulf Coast region and at least deal with the ones that pose the biggest problems to birds, said the American Bird Conservancy’s executive director for conservation advocacy. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that between 4 million to 50 million birds die every year colliding with communication towers as they cross the Gulf of Mexico during the fall and spring seasons. Towers at a certain height have lights that attract the birds, which fly into them, each other or the tower wires. In the ruling Tuesday, the court also said the FCC did not justify why it did not use federal wildlife experts to assess the environmental threat.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080219/ap_on_hi_te/communications_towers_court_ruling;_ylt=AkiRrK2h2Xi80OPu9MIddun67rEF

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to report

[\[Return to top\]](#)

National Monuments & Icons Sector

33. *February 19, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Pipe bomb found in Bellingham WA is defused.** In Washington, a pipe bomb found at Bellingham's Arroyo Park was defused by the city's police department bomb squad on February 19. A police sergeant says a citizen, who was cleaning up garbage in the park the day before, found what appeared to be a 4-inch-long pipe bomb with a fuse. He put the pipe bomb in a garbage bag, placed the bag in the back of his pickup truck, and went home. He contacted police about the bomb about 9:40 a.m. on February 19. Police used a robot to pick up the bomb and destroy it, with the incident ending about 1:30 p.m. The sergeant says there was no indication where the bomb came from or how long it had been in the park.

Source: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/6420ap_wa_pipe_bomb.html

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Dams Sector

34. *February 20, Valley Morning Star* – (Texas) **Commissioners back levee plan.** A proposal to build a concrete wall to bolster Rio Grande levees against Katrina-like flooding, and to satisfy Department of Homeland Security demands for a barrier against terrorists and undocumented immigrants, drew fire Tuesday. Environmentalists and defenders of civil liberties told Cameron County leaders they have serious concerns about adopting a plan by Hidalgo County to reinforce existing river levees with an 18-foot concrete wall to hold back flooding and undocumented river crossers. Consultants showed drawings of the proposed levee wall that would protect the county against flooding as well as illegal entry. A paved road on top of the levee would make it possible for Border Patrol vehicles to move along the top of the levee without damaging the levee, as happens now when vehicles damage earthen walls. Federal officials are not taking into consideration what will happen to private and public property owners whose land will be on the south side of the border wall, said the general manager of the Brownsville Public Utilities Board. Taxpayers will have to pay for millions of dollars in facilities such as pumping and filtration stations, as well as irrigation pump houses and equipment, he said. Federal officials are not giving answers about how cities, farmers and landowners will be affected when their access to the Rio Grande is cut off, he said.

Source:

http://www.brownsvilleherald.com/news/wall_84549_article.html/county_border.html

35. *February 19, WIFR 23 Rockford* – (Illinois) **Alpine Dam Safety Study.** A U.S. senator, a congressman, and the mayor of Rockford, Illinois, signed a flood risk feasibility study for the Alpine Dam. It is a move that will bring in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether work needs to be done to improve the dam. The study comes after two floods on the south branch of Keith Creek last year. City leaders say this is a good first step.

Source: <http://www.wifr.com/news/headlines/15780187.html>

36. *February 19, Gladwin County Record* – (Michigan) **City looks for help with dam repairs.** The dam in Beaverton, Michigan, holds back a lot more than the water that fills Ross Lake. In fact, if the dam were to suddenly burst and Ross Lake revert to its natural state as a river, Beaverton and Gladwin County could lose long-time thermoforming company Brown Machine. There have been small repairs over the years – minor fix-its which include adding rubber and yearly rust scrapings and paint touch-ups – but the metal has never changed. “The metal on the arms of some of these gates is so rusty that you can see the ground underneath the arm,” the Beaverton City Manager said. In some places, the metal is so thin on the gates themselves that there is moisture seeping through. Last fall while workers were scraping the metal in order to paint it, a scraper went through the metal. Funding remains a problem, but Beaverton is currently applying for a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration. Their final decision will be made later this spring.
Source: http://www.gladwinmi.com/record/?section_id=1&story_id=50464

[\[Return to top\]](#)

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