



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 25 April 2008

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



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

- According to the Daily Breeze, attorneys for the University of California, Los Angeles, on Tuesday obtained a preliminary injunction against animal rights groups and activists accused of harassing university researchers who conduct experiments using animals. The injunction extends and expands a temporary restraining order granted February 22. (See item [22](#))
- Computerworld reports large numbers of legitimate Web sites, including government sites in the U.K. and some operated by the United Nations, have been hacked and are serving up malware, a security researcher said Thursday, as massive JavaScript attacks last detected in March resume. (See item [25](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

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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. *April 24, Associated Press* – (Texas) **Possible twisters touch down in west, north Texas.** Several tornadoes may have touched down in west and north Texas on Wednesday as part of a severe thunderstorm system that knocked down some power lines and trees as it moved across the state, weather officials said. Storms brought winds of up to 70 miles per hour and baseball-size hail in some counties. A Jones County judge said a storm that moved through the northern portion of the county damaged roofs

and knocked down power lines. One highway was closed by the downed poles. As the storm moved east, at least one tornado was reported in Erath County and the same one appears to have touched down nearby in Palo Pinto County. Several power lines and trees were knocked down along the Erath-Palo Pinto line.

Source: <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/APStories/stories/D907TI3O1.html>

2. *April 24, San Francisco Chronicle* – (California) **PG&E gets OK to build power plant in valley.** Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (PG&E) won permission from California energy regulators on Wednesday to build a \$673 million, gas-burning power plant in Colusa County. San Francisco's PG&E plans to break ground on the project later this spring, with the generating station scheduled to begin operations in 2010. It will produce up to 660 megawatts of electricity, enough to power 495,000 homes.

Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/04/24/BUNC10AM9K.DTL>

3. *April 23, Associated Press* – (International) **Greenhouse gases gathering at faster pace.** Major greenhouse gases in the air are accumulating faster than in the past. Carbon dioxide concentration in the air, primarily from burning fossil fuels, increased by 2.4 parts per million last year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported Wednesday, and methane concentrations also rose rapidly. Since 2000, annual increases of two parts per million or more have been common, compared with 1.5 ppm per year in the 1980s and less than one ppm per year during the 1960s. Global concentration of carbon dioxide is now nearly 385 parts per million. Preindustrial carbon dioxide levels hovered around 280 ppm until 1850. Human activities pushed those levels up to 380 ppm by early 2006. Rapidly growing industrialization in Asia is one of the most likely causes of the recent methane increase. Methane in the atmosphere rose by 27 million tons last year after nearly a decade with little or no increase. Most atmospheric scientists are concerned that the increasing accumulation is causing the Earth's temperature to rise, potentially disrupting climate and changing patterns of rainfall, drought, and other storms.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/04/23/greenhouse.gases.ap/index.html>

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Chemical Industry Sector

Nothing to Report

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

4. *April 24, News & Observer* – (North Carolina; South Carolina) **Cost of nuclear plant fuels battle.** As the fight over nuclear energy shifts from safety to cost, timing the public release of the multibillion-dollar expense takes on an increasingly strategic value to both sides. Nuclear opponents are trying to force Duke Energy of Charlotte to disclose the projected cost of a proposed nuclear plant in Cherokee County, South

Carolina, that would serve the Carolinas. The groups have asked officials in both states to require that Duke disclose the estimate. South Carolina regulators are expected to rule on the request Thursday. North Carolina regulators could decide as early as next Tuesday. Duke is still negotiating with vendors and contractors, contending that its cost estimates are proprietary and sensitive.

Source: <http://www.newsobserver.com/business/nc/story/1048035.html>

5. *April 24, Associated Press* – (National) **Utah won't take foreign nuclear waste processed at OR.** The governor of Utah said Wednesday he will block the shipment of Italian nuclear waste to Utah, reversing his earlier position that foreign waste should be an issue decided by the federal government. He said he directed Utah's representative on the Northwest Interstate Low-Level Waste Compact to vote against allowing the waste into Utah. It is on the agenda at a May 8 meeting. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission can approve EnergySolutions Inc.'s application to import 20,000 tons of low-level radioactive waste, but the multistate group can keep the waste from coming here. Under the group's rules, a state that would get the foreign waste can veto it.
Source: <http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/apr/24/utah-wont-take-foreign-nuclear-waste-processed/>
6. *April 24, Schenectady Daily Gazette* – (National) **Regulator says more nuclear engineers needed.** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission chairman spoke to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute students and faculty Thursday on a self-described recruiting mission to stimulate interest in nuclear engineering and possibly careers working for the NRC. He warned the nuclear power industry faces a potential shortage of qualified engineers. "A report prepared by the nuclear power industry has estimated that roughly 35 percent of the current [nuclear energy] utility personnel will be eligible for retirement within five years," he said. "The situation for government agencies such as the NRC, the [U.S.] Department of Energy and the national laboratories, is equally dramatic."
Source: http://www.dailygazette.com/news/2008/apr/24/0424_Nuclear/
7. *April 24, Brattleboro Reformer* – (Vermont) **VY practices dry cask storage transfer.** In 2006, Vermont's Public Service Board approved a dry cask storage facility for spent fuel at Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon. Soon technicians will be removing fuel rod assemblies from the pool and placing them in casks installed on a concrete pad just north of the reactor building. To get ready for the transfer, plant employees are spending the week performing practice runs, simulating the entire process minus the actual movement of spent fuel. "The purpose is to carefully go through the steps in their procedures to make sure everything is in place for safe movement of the spent fuel. The [U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission] will remain onsite and observe this process. DPS will be onsite next week to review the procedures, prior to the actual transfer," said a spokesman for Vermont's Department of Public Service.
Source: http://www.reformer.com/headlines/ci_9036160
8. *April 23, Associated Press* – (Vermont) **House OKs increase in Yankee decommissioning fund.** The House on Wednesday advanced a Senate-passed bill

directing the Public Service Board to get assurances there will be enough money in the decommissioning fund to dismantle Vermont Yankee when it closes before it approves a planned corporate reorganization of Vermont Yankee owner Entergy Nuclear. Recent estimates put the fund at about \$425 million, and the cost of decommissioning, if it begins in 2012, at more than \$800 million. No one knows, lawmakers agreed, when the plant will be shut down, whether it will be dismantled soon after that or left idle for decades to let its radioactivity cool down, how much decommissioning will cost, whether the decommissioning fund will see investment growth, or whether it will grow enough to meet the cost.

Source:

<http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080423/NEWS/80423030>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

9. *April 24, Strategy Page* – (National) **The all seeing periscope.** The U.S. Navy is installing a 360 degree video camera in the periscopes of its submarines. Currently, the Navy uses a 12 megapixel day camera, and a lower resolution (640 x 480 pixel) night vision camera. Both of these display the images on various flat panel displays inside the ship, including a very large one in the Combat Information Center. The 360 degree camera will record all that it sees, so that the crew can later review what was there. This will enable the submarine to keep its periscope above water for a minimal amount of time when in hostile territory, or provide a record of what was happening in case there is an accident as the sub is surfacing.

Source: <http://www.strategypage.com/htmw/htsub/articles/20080424.aspx>

10. *April 24, Jane's* – (National) **Simulation systems take the strain as sailors train ashore.** In March, the U.S. Navy secretary filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court requesting it reverse a ruling that would increase restrictions on naval training activities in the Southern California (SOCAL) Range Complex. At the center of the argument is a campaign by the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to limit the Navy's use of mid-frequency active (MFA) sonar, citing alleged damage to marine mammals. The NRDC won a preliminary injunction from the U.S. District Court of California in January ordering the Navy to "cease use of MFA sonar...when marine mammals are spotted within 2,200 yards" of a warship or submarine operating within 12 miles of the Californian coastline. Switching off an MFA sonar and then turning it on again during an exercise is not a simple procedure, says a Navy officer. In addition, the technology is simply not available to conduct specialist sonar training onshore. If the restrictions are imposed, he fears the Navy will end up with a reduced level of skill in the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) vocation. "SOCAL is the only place on the west coast that we can do the training that we do," he says.

Source: http://www.janes.com/news/defence/naval/jni/jni080424_1_n.shtml

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Banking and Finance Sector

11. *April 23, KTVU 2 Oakland* – (California) **Oakland sues major investment banks for alleged price-fixing.** Oakland filed a class-action federal antitrust lawsuit Wednesday against national financial firms, including Bank of America, Bear Stearns, J.P. Morgan, and Wachovia Bank, accusing them of conspiring to gouge taxpayers through illegal price fixing and bid rigging. A city attorney said the suit alleges that financial companies agreed among themselves to give Oakland and other American cities artificially low bids for guaranteed investment contracts, which cities use to pay bond obligations. He said that without competitive bidding, there is no real free market, and financial companies and brokers were able to give cities abnormally low interest rates, thereby cheating taxpayers out of a reasonable rate of return on their investments. He said the alleged collusion among competitors is a clear violation of federal and state antitrust laws, which prohibit any agreement by companies to fix prices, rig bids, or allocate specific customers. The official said Oakland has lost at least \$500,000 since 1992 by receiving less interest income than it should have received from its contracts with financial firms. He said the lawsuit is the first of its kind in California, although several similar suits have been filed on the East Coast.

Source: <http://www.ktvu.com/news/15969587/detail.html>

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Transportation Sector

12. *April 24, WCVB 5 Boston* – (Massachusetts) **MBTA, TSA check bags for explosives.** The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) conducted drills on Thursday to ensure the safety of its passengers. NewsCenter 5's staff reported that commuters at the Braintree MBTA stop were greeted by MBTA police. Officials randomly selected people to have their bags inspected by federal Transportation Security Administration workers. The bag is swapped with a piece of cloth, and the cloth is then entered into a high-tech portable detection unit. The drills are designed to see how well the MBTA is equipped to deal with a security surge if there is a threat. MBTA police already do random bag searches, but this drill is to prepare in case the Department of Homeland Security raises the threat level to orange.

Source: <http://www.thebostonchannel.com/news/15975650/detail.html>

13. *April 24, Los Angeles Daily News* – (California) **L.A.'s port gets barrier to stop any boat-bomb attack.** Several tugboats circled around the main channel at the Port of Los Angeles on Wednesday as crews linked pieces of a floating boom across the cruise-ship terminal. While the foam and steel-cable barrier might not look like much, port authorities say they hope it will serve as a deterrent to small boats that could pose a threat to cruise ships and cargo vessels passing through the port. "It's not intended to do damage to a boat," said the director of homeland security for the Port of Los Angeles. "We just want to stop it and keep it from going where we don't want it to go." Port officials purchased 5,000 feet worth of the barrier with funds from a federal Department of Homeland Security grant, according to a port spokesman. Port officials said they hope

the new security barrier will prevent a terrorist attack like the one in Yemen that killed 17 American sailors and wounded 39 others when a small boat laden with explosives blew a large hole in the USS Cole on October 12, 2000. About 50 port police officers used the occasion to conduct a drill and test several other tools aimed at bolstering security.

Source: http://www.dailynews.com/news/ci_9032622

14. *April 23, Newsday* – (New York) **Plane makes safe emergency landing at MacArthur.** There were some anxious moments at Long Island MacArthur airport on Tuesday after a landing gear indicator light malfunctioned on a US Airways commuter flight from Philadelphia that carried 35 passengers and crew. Despite the scare, the plane landed safely. A US Airways spokesman said Wednesday that the plane's crew never declared an emergency. The faulty indicator light that first indicated that a landing gear was not down properly and locked in place was reset before the plane actually landed, and indicated that all was well. The aircraft was a de Havilland Dash-8, a high-winged turboprop built by Bombardier Aerospace in Quebec and operated by Piedmont Airlines, a US Airways partner.

Source: <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/suffolk/ny-liair0424,0,5148627.story>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to Report

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *April 22, Seattle Times* – (Oregon) **Animal rights advocates say they freed mink at Oregon farm.** The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is claiming responsibility for releasing 40 mink Monday from a fur farm in Jefferson, Oregon, and for destroying the farm's breeding records. In a communiqué released Tuesday evening, ALF said the mink might face a tough road away from the farm but that it was better "to die free" than at the hands of captors. It also warned that the sabotage would continue unless the owners of the Jefferson Fur Farm shut down their operation. But Fur Commission USA, which represents fur farms, reported Tuesday that all the mink were recovered and returned to their pens. The sabotage was announced by the North American Animal Liberation Press Office in Los Angeles and attributed to ALF-Cascadia. The communiqué struck a defiant tone against federal efforts to track down and prosecute alleged members of the underground cells. Fur Commission USA said that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and local law enforcement were investigating the incident. "Farmers around the country have been advised to double-check their security," stated the executive director of Fur Commission USA, a nonprofit trade association representing mink farmers in 28 states raising three million mink a year.

Source: http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004367362_webalf23m.html

16. *April 22, Dow Jones* – (National) **FBI agent urges food safety vigilance.** Constant vigilance is needed to keep U.S. food safe, according to a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) section chief. The official spoke Tuesday to a general session of the third annual International Symposium on Agroterrorism. She said keeping out diseases from U.S. crops and livestock is the number one priority for her division of the FBI, and an act of terrorism could come at any point in the production cycle. She broke down threat sources as domestic and international. She said anti-biotechnical groups like the Earth Liberation Front and lesser-known domestic extremist groups often inflict vandalism and violence threats. Those acts have been successful in driving some scientists away from the research, she said. Animal rights extremist groups like the Animal Liberation Front also have a history of attacking scientific establishments using animals for disease research, she said. These groups also are credited with vandalizing restaurants, swine facilities, as well as individual scientists. In the post 9/11 environment, it is imperative that more is done to pre-empt and disrupt potential acts of terrorism against U.S. agriculture. Because of this, the FBI is using the Patriot Act to clamp down on these groups to deter terrorist attacks in the U.S. and abroad, she said. The U.S. has been working with other countries to track down reported terrorist plans, the official said. "Just because there is no current verbalized threat to the U.S. food supply doesn't mean one isn't being planned. Constant vigilance is key," she said. Source: <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/Content.asp?ContentID=215638>

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Water Sector

17. *April 24, Associated Press* – (Kansas) **Uranium levels high in water in nine communities.** Public water supplies in nine communities in Kansas consistently have registered uranium levels above federal standards, with one city showing a level almost three times higher than recommended, officials said Wednesday. The spokesman for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment said that while long-term exposure to high levels of uranium in drinking water can lead to kidney damage and cancer, the current high levels of uranium did not pose an immediate threat to the public. Source: http://cjonline.com/stories/042408/kan_271647575.shtml

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

18. *April 23, Associated Press* – (National) **House panel criticizes F.D.A. role in drug cases.** House members chastised the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Tuesday for not doing more inspections of foreign drug manufacturers in the wake of a litany of problems with the blood thinner heparin and other products. Concerns about the inspection program were recently highlighted when the FDA learned that contaminated doses of heparin had probably come through a Chinese plant that the agency had never inspected. Federal officials said Monday that the contaminated heparin was clearly linked to severe reactions now associated with 81 deaths in the U.S. In the last fiscal year, the agency conducted only 30 inspections of the more than 3,200

foreign drug companies, according to government auditors. It plans to conduct at least 50 this year. The commissioner told a subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee that he had asked the administration for more money to conduct inspections, but he did not specify how much. He agreed that more inspections were needed, but not to the lengths Democrats suggested, which is to inspect every foreign company every two to three years.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/health/policy/23heparin.html?ref=world>

19. *April 23, Associated Press* – (National) **Fraud costs military health program \$100 million-plus.** The U.S. military's health insurance program has been swindled out of more than \$100 million over the past decade in the Philippines, where doctors, hospitals, and clinics have conspired with American veterans to submit bogus claims, according to prosecutors and court records. Seventeen people have been convicted so far – including at least a dozen U.S. military retirees – in an investigation that has been handled by federal prosecutors out of Wisconsin, because a Madison company holds the contract to process many of the claims. It has not been accused of any wrongdoing. At the center of the case is Tricare, a Pentagon-run program that insures 9.2 million current and former service members and dependents worldwide. Health care providers in the Philippines filed claims for medical services never delivered, inflated claims by as much as 2,000 percent, and shared kickbacks with retirees who played along, court records reviewed by the Associated Press show. Pentagon auditors say Tricare moved slowly to uncover and stop the fraud. And a February audit warned that the program is still vulnerable to rip-offs because of lax controls and that similar fraud schemes are starting to emerge in Latin America.

Source:

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5i5SIS8cfUcdI2yU217ImCRW37jQAD907O7880>

20. *April 23, MSNBC* – (National) **Potentially deadly intestinal infections double.** In 2005, some 301,200 people contracted *Clostridium difficile*-associated disease, a potentially deadly diarrheal infection known as CDAD, more than twice as many as previously counted, and 28,600 people died from the infection that year, according to a new report by the federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. That sharp spike follows a 74 percent increase in the number of CDAD cases recorded between 1993 and 2000. Overall, more than two million patients contracted the serious intestinal infection between 1993 and 2005, the report showed. It is not clear how much of the spike in CDAD cases was caused by more complete reporting of the hospital discharge data, said an epidemiologist with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who analyzed the data. What is clear, however, is that CDAD was more frequently listed as the primary or secondary condition at discharge, he added. The data did not include specific information about a new, virulent strain estimated to be about 20 times more toxic than previously known strains. The North American Phenotype 1/027 strain has been responsible for deadly outbreaks of the infection in Europe, Canada, and the U.S. during the past several years. CDAD can be resistant to many frontline antibiotics, forcing use of the stronger vancomycin. But some infections are resistant to that drug as well, making them difficult or impossible to cure.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/24277609/>

21. *April 23, TNN* – (International) **Fresh bird flu outbreak in Tripura.** Avian influenza is back in Tripura, India. The disease resurfaced within one week of declaring the state as bird flu-free. Sources said the disease has resurfaced at Mohanpur. Top officials from the veterinary department and district administration will meet on Wednesday morning to take stock of the situation. A source said that culling operations may begin on Wednesday. According to guidelines, all birds in and around five kilometers from the affected areas must be culled. Two experts from Bhopal will arrive in the state on Wednesday to assist officials.

Source:

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Markets/Commodities/%20Fresh_bird_flu_outbreak_in_Tripura/articleshow/2973841.cms

Government Facilities Sector

22. *April 23, Daily Breeze* – (California) **UCLA gets injunction against animal rights groups.** Attorneys for the University of California, Los Angeles, on Tuesday obtained a preliminary injunction against animal rights groups and activists accused of harassing university researchers who conduct experiments using animals. The injunction extends and expands a temporary restraining order granted February 22, according to UCLA's chancellor. According to UCLA, the preliminary injunction prohibits three groups and five individuals from coming within 50 feet of the residences of UCLA personnel involved in animal research during any demonstration and 150 feet at night. It also prohibits the posting of personal information about UCLA personnel on Web sites maintained by the groups and individuals. The order remains in effect until a trial is held on whether to issue a permanent injunction. A February 17, 2009, trial date is set.

Source: http://www.dailybreeze.com/ci_9025470

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Emergency Services Sector

23. *April 23, Beaufort Gazette* – (South Carolina) **National Guard earthquake drill brushes up on terrorist training, too.** The C-130 Hercules transport plane could become the main mode of evacuation for Hilton Head residents stranded if the bridges were destroyed by a natural disaster, and local officials were anxious to see a successful landing and takeoff. Two transports landed Wednesday as part of the National Guard's annual Vigilant Guard training exercise. "That was five months' worth of work," said a Beaufort County emergency management director. He had spent much of the year preparing for the training exercises designed to simulate an earthquake. But the same exercise would be just as useful for a hurricane. As part of the C-130 training scenario, Air Force experts tested the runway. They eventually pronounced it capable of handling the aircraft. Officials said that while an empty C-130 is above the current weight limit, the runway can withstand a relatively high number of landings during emergency situations. As part of the exercise, the first transport picked up 22 mock evacuees from

the airport hangar and took them off the island. A National Guard officer who oversaw the exercise that brought more than 3,000 troops to Beaufort County for the three-day event said, “The big thing is, the aircraft got in and it got in safely.

Source: <http://www.beaufortgazette.com/local/story/416625.html>

24. *April 23, Miami Herald* – (Florida) **Broward, FL paramedics tested in mock accident.** Paramedics representing six fire-rescue departments from across Broward met Tuesday for the 12th annual First There, First Care EMS Conference. Teams of paramedics were given an emergency medical situation to push their skills and test their knowledge. The scenario was the following: As a mother and her two children crossed the street, a sport utility vehicle suddenly struck the children when the man behind the wheel suffered a stroke. The young boy was unconscious and the girl could not feel her legs. Each team of three paramedics was told they must stabilize the victims in less than 15 minutes. The winners of the conference will go on to compete in July in the national tournament in Orlando.

Source: <http://www.emsresponder.com/article/article.jsp?siteSection=1&id=7417>

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Information Technology

25. *April 23, Computerworld* – (International) **Hackers jack thousands of sites, including UN domains.** Large numbers of legitimate Web sites, including government sites in the U.K. and some operated by the United Nations (UN), have been hacked and are serving up malware, a security researcher said today as massive JavaScript attacks last detected in March resume. “They’re using the same techniques as last month, of an SQL injection of some sort,” said the vice president of security research at Websense Inc., referring to large-scale attacks that have plagued the Internet since January. Among the sites hacked were several affiliated with either the UN or U.K. government agencies. The exact number of sites that have been compromised is unknown. He estimated that it is similar to the March attacks, which at their height infected more than 100,000 URLs, including prominent domains such as MSNBC.com. “The attackers have now switched over to a new domain as their hub for hosting the malicious payload in this attack,” Websense said in an alert posted yesterday to its Web site. “We have no doubt that the two attacks are related.” Although the malware-hosting domain has changed, it is located at a Chinese IP address, just like the one used in March, he said. “It also looks like they’re using just the one [hosting] site, but changing the link within the JavaScript,” he added, talking about an obfuscation tactic that the attackers have used before.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9079961&source=rss_topic17

26. *April 23, Dark Reading* – (International) **Researchers infiltrate and ‘pollute’ Storm botnet.** Sophisticated peer-to-peer (P2P) botnets like Storm that have no centralized command and control architecture have frustrated researchers because they are tough to dismantle. But a group of European researchers has come up with a way to disrupt these stealthy botnets – by “polluting” them. The researchers, from the University of

Mannheim and the Institut Eurecom, recently infiltrated Storm to test out a method they came up with of analyzing and disrupting P2P botnets. Their technique is a spinoff of traditional botnet tracking, but with a twist: It not only entails capturing bot binaries and infiltrating the P2P network, but it also exploits weaknesses in the botnet's P2P protocol to inject "polluted" content into the botnet to disrupt communication among the bots, as well as to study them more closely. The researchers tested their pollution method out on Storm, and it worked. They presented their research this month at Usenix. "Our measurements show that our strategy can be used as a way to disable the communication within the Storm botnet to a large extent," the researchers wrote in their paper. "As a side effect, we are able to estimate the size of the Storm botnet, in general a hard task." Their Storm stats: the researchers crawled Storm every 30 minutes from December of last year through February of this year, and saw between 5,000 and 40,000 machines online at a time. And the U.S. has the most Storm bots, with 23 percent, according to the researchers, who said they spotted Storm bots in 200 countries.

Source: http://www.darkreading.com/document.asp?doc_id=151862&f_src=drdaily

27. *April 22, New Scientist News* – (National) **Beating the "botnets."** A team at the University of Washington wants to marshal swarms of good computers to neutralize the bad ones. They say their plan would be cheap to implement and could cope with botnets of any size. Current countermeasures are being outstripped by the growing size of botnets, says the Washington team, but assembling swarms of good computers in defense could render DDoS attacks obsolete. Their system, called Phalanx, uses its own large network of computers to shield the protected server. Instead of the server being accessed directly, all information must pass through the swarm of "mailbox" computers. The many mailboxes do not simply relay information to the server like a funnel – they only pass on information when the server requests it. That allows the server to work at its own pace, without being swamped. Phalanx also requires computers wishing to start communicating with the protected server to solve a computational puzzle. This takes only a small amount of time for a normal web user accessing a site. But a zombie computer sending repeated requests would be significantly slowed down. The Washington team simulated an attack by a million-computer botnet on a server connected to a network of 7,200 mailboxes organized by Phalanx. Even when the majority of the mailboxes were under simultaneous attack, the server was not overwhelmed and could still function normally. A paper on Phalanx was presented at the USENIX symposium on Networked Systems Design and Implementation, held last week in San Francisco.

Source: <http://technology.newscientist.com/article/dn13753-to-defeat-a-malicious-botnet-build-a-friendly-one.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/>.

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Communications Sector

28. *April 23, IDG News Service* – (National) **Telecom carriers: ‘Phantom’ voice traffic costing billions.** Some VoIP and mobile phone service providers are riding free when connecting to the traditional telephone network in the U.S., potentially costing carriers billions of dollars, according to testimony at a Senate hearing Wednesday. Many voice calls now do not include the identification needed for carriers to charge access fees for calls coming into their networks, said the general manager of Rock Port Telephone. These so-called phantom calls are particularly hard on rural telephone carriers, which receive an average 29 percent of their revenues from the intercarrier compensation system, he told the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. Some VoIP providers have refused to pay access fees by saying the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has “given them permission to use the networks for free because they’re IP,” he said. In 2007, 18 percent of Rock Port Telephone’s voice minutes were unbillable, and some rural carriers are seeing up to 30 percent of their minutes from phantom traffic, he said. He asked senators to push the FCC to require that all voice traffic pay intercarrier compensation fees. “If the FCC lets this continue, Americans who live in rural areas will likely see their phone bills escalate,” he said. “Their quality of service will be decreased, and [there will be] large reductions of investments in broadband.”

Source: http://www.infoworld.com/article/08/04/23/Telecom-carriers-Phantom-voice-traffic-costing-billions_1.html

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Commercial Facilities Sector

29. *April 24, Associated Press* – (Florida) **Army to detonate WWII munitions found on former bomb range in Orlando.** The Army Corps of Engineers will detonate more World War II-era munitions found at a former Orlando bombing range this week. The Corps has been investigating munitions found on the former Army bombing range. Roughly 42 more live bombs and projectiles – including one 100-pound “burster bomb” – have been discovered there. Since July, more than 220 other bombs and rockets have been discovered.

Source: <http://www.wwsb.com/Global/story.asp?S=8219111>

30. *April 23, WPLG 10 Miami* – (Florida) **FBI to investigate synagogue fire as hate crime.** The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will launch an investigation into whether a fire that destroyed a Miami Beach synagogue Tuesday was an act of arson. A U.S. Representative from Florida on Wednesday asked the FBI director to investigate if the fires at the Chabad House and another Miami Beach synagogue in October were hate crimes. Firefighters initially saw nothing to suggest arson, but the rabbi did, outside on the lawn. He found one of two rods that hold the synagogue’s Torah. It showed no signs of burn, though inside, the housing where it had been kept was destroyed. The rabbi believes an arsonist stole the Torah and dropped one of its rods on the way out. That discovery prompted fire officials to string crime tape around the building and begin a

criminal probe into a possible hate crime, although police said to label it such at this point would be premature.

Source: <http://www.local10.com/news/15973932/detail.html>

31. *April 23, IDG News Service* – (International) **China worries hackers will strike during Beijing Olympics.** Chinese security officials remain worried hackers will strike while the Olympic Games are being held in Beijing. “Based on historical experience, many hackers seeking to make a name for themselves view the Olympic Games as a challenge and a target, and the Beijing Olympics may face attacks from individual hackers, groups, organizations, as well as other countries and those with all kinds of political motivations, therefore the network security situation is very grim,” China’s National Computer Network Emergency Response Technical Team (CNCERT) said in a report released earlier this month. The urgency of tighter network security for the Olympic Games was highlighted at a recent conference in the southern city of Shenzhen, jointly organized by CNCERT, the Internet Association of China, and China’s Working Committee on Information Security, where a vice minister at the Ministry of Information Industry called on participants to spare no effort to boost network security in China ahead of the Games. Among moves the Chinese government has taken to tighten network security during the Olympics, it created a special response team in Beijing that will monitor systems for signs of attacks and then respond if one is detected. The prevalence of malware in China means maintaining network security during the Olympics will be a significant challenge.

Source:

http://www.peworld.com/businesscenter/article/145043/china_worries_hackers_will_strike_during_beijing_olympics.html

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

32. *April 24, Christian Science Monitor* – (National) **Why national parks, coal-fired power plants may be neighbors.** The air quality of at least ten national parks is threatened by plans to build at least two dozen new coal-fired power plants, parks advocates and air-quality experts say. The reason for this is a federal proposal that would lower the bar for developers seeking permits to build upwind of the parks, these critics say. Despite internal criticism by its own staff experts, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proceeding with a plan by year’s end to revise regulations under the Clean Air Act that currently safeguard areas with some of the nation’s cleanest air. Across the U.S., 156 national parks, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges have been designated by Congress as Class-1 areas, granting them the toughest legal protection. Officially, the EPA says it is proposing “refinements” to regulations that measure Class-1 air-quality standards. Inside the EPA, staff air experts have protested that the proposal would weaken the criteria used to evaluate just how polluted a Class 1 area already is – and how much pollution a new industrial facility would be permitted to add to that area. EPA regional staff experts, in internal documents, said the proposal provided “the lowest possible degree of protection” against spikes in pollution – a common occurrence during hot days, when power plants operate at near maximum

output.

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0424/p13s02-sten.html>

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Dams Sector

33. *April 24, Baltimore Sun* – (Maryland) **Md. asks city for emergency repair at Lake Roland Dam.** State regulators have asked Baltimore to make emergency repairs to gates that regulate the flow of water from the Lake Roland Dam in Baltimore County, city and state officials said yesterday. A spokesman with the Maryland Department of the Environment said state inspectors noted bent rods on the dam's sluice gates last summer. City and state officials said there was never any direct danger to public safety because of the bent rods but added that all citations for dam inspections are taken seriously and demand prompt attention. The chief of engineering services for the city's Department of Recreation and Parks – which oversees the dam – said the problem is not serious enough to raise concerns of failure and said it should be fixed this year.

Source: http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore_city/bal-md.ci.dam24apr24,0,7690977.story

34. *April 23, Asbury Park Press* – (New Jersey) **Vandals damage Forge Pond dam.** Vandals used planks to raise the height of the dam and the water level at the historic spillway and dam at Forge Pond. An employee of Forge Pond Developers called police on Sunday afternoon to say that planks had been used to dam the flow of water out of the pond, increasing the water level and damaging wildlife and vegetation around the pond. As a result, the historic spillway and dam had degraded, fractured, and leaked due to increased water pressure. Employees of the developer removed the planks and called police.

Source: <http://www.app.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080423/NEWS/80423021>

35. *April 23, Columbia Missourian* – (Missouri) **Hominy Branch dam break dries up Moon Valley Lake.** Sometime during the week of March 17, the dam on Hominy Branch that made Moon Valley Lake broke and within a couple of days the lake was gone. Heavy rainfall was likely the cause of the dam failure, and what will happen to the property is uncertain. Since the failure, the owner has been looking into donating the land for preservation, but its location in the Hinkson Creek watershed is making the parcel difficult to sell. The previous dam was unregulated, meaning it did not meet the 35-foot height requirement to have regular inspections under the state Dam Safety Program, said the division information officer for the Department of Natural Resources.

Source: <http://www.columbiamissourian.com/stories/2008/04/23/hominy-branch-dam-break-dries-moon-valley-lake/>

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