Top Stories

- According to SC Magazine, a recently released government report concluded that Web applications that are used to support the operations of the nation’s air traffic control systems are not properly secured nor configured to prevent attacks or improper access, and the Federal Aviation Agency lacks robust intrusion detection. (See item 21)

- The Baltimore Examiner reports that eight Prince Georges County, Maryland firefighters narrowly escaped with their lives following a massive explosion at the scene of a gas leak in a row of commercial occupancies at the Penn Mar Shopping Center on May 7. (See item 42)

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Energy Sector

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1. **May 7, CBC News** – (International) Vandals playing with lives by shooting at insulators, utility says. In Canada, vandals taking potshots at power lines are being blamed for power outages on Newfoundland’s southwest coast. Newfoundland Power
said chunks of insulators on lines near Rose Blanche have been shot off recently, causing consumer disruptions and putting the lives of crews — and even the vandals themselves — at risk. About 25,000 volts of electricity travel through the wires, which are connected to the Rose Blanche hydroelectric plant near Port aux Basques. A communications official with Newfoundland Power said the utility is offering $5,000 for information leading to an arrest in vandalism that occurred on April 29. The vandals knocked out power in the area twice. Shooting at insulators, the communications official said, is a highly risky activity. “Once these insulators are damaged, the electricity then is able to travel. It can have an immediate impact on the vandals themselves,” the communications official said. “If our employees happen to work on that line and didn’t recognize that hazard, they can get an electric shock [which] can even lead to death.”


2. May 7, Clarion Ledger – (Alabama; Mississippi) Storms continue to pound state.

Days after a powerful storm knocked out power to thousands across Mississippi, another line of storms wreaked havoc on May 6 in central Mississippi, including Jackson. Several counties experienced power outages, according to state emergency officials. About 4,400 Entergy customers in Jackson and Clarksdale lost power, a spokeswoman said. On May 3, more than 23,000 Entergy customers lost power in central and southern Mississippi from storms that produced heavy wind gusts. The Associated Press reports that service was restored to about 48,000 Alabama Power Co. customers in Alabama on May 4 after a not very common weather phenomenon, called a derecho, moved across the central part of the state. A spokesman for the utility said another 2,500 customers lost power on May 4 in a second round of storms, but all those who lost electricity May 3 were back up.

Source: http://www.clarionledger.com/article/20090507/NEWS/905070345/1001/news/Storms+continue+to+pound+state

See also: http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/article/20090505/NEWS02/905050334/1009/Most+power+restored+in+state+after+storm

3. May 7, Lynchburg News & Advance – (Virginia) Last Appomattox pipeline pumping at full pressure. The last of three natural gas pipelines that run through Appomattox County is being returned to full service May 7 — 237 days after one line exploded, injuring five people, leveling two homes and damaging about 100 other houses. Williams Gas Co. received federal approval May 6 to return its C line to an operating pressure of 800 pounds per square inch, said a company spokesman. The line, which runs adjacent to the one that ruptured on September 14, has been operating at 640 psi since the explosion. The natural gas that one of the pipes released blew into a fireball that scorched an area 1,125 feet in diameter, according to preliminary findings in the federal investigation. The three pipelines run side by side through Appomattox County carrying natural gas from the Gulf of Mexico to New York. The approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration came after Williams inspected some 695 feet of pipeline at 16 locations throughout the
month of April along pipe in Appomattox, the company spokesman said. Eleven sections of pipe were cut out and replaced and two sections were re-coated with a tar enamel to prevent corrosion. The amount of pipe that was replaced totaled 825 feet, including some sections that were not in need of repair but were removed to tie in the places that did need to be replaced in the construction. Pressure on the line was gradually increased May 7 to reach full pressure May 7. The B line, the one that exploded, was repaired and brought back to full pressure on December 26. The other line, the A line, was fully restored on November 10. About 2,500 feet of the B line was replaced following the explosion. The investigation into the failure revealed that the more-than-50-year-old pipe was corroding from the outside, and that thinning was not fully revealed by the tools used to examine the pipes.


For another story, see item 8

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Chemical Industry Sector

4. May 8, St. Petersburg Times – (Florida) Chemical spill after collision closes Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard in Clearwater. Two vehicles crashed into a building next door to the entrance of the Glen Ellen mobile home community at 2882 Gulf-to-Bay Blvd in Clearwater. One of them was a truck carrying 15 to 20 gallons of pesticides and insecticides. Clearwater Fire & Rescue and Clearwater police responded, along with the Pinellas County HazMat Team, which is standard procedure when an unknown chemical agent is involved, a Clearwater public safety spokeswoman said. As a cleanup ensued, the road’s westbound lanes were closed for about two hours. There was no health hazard.

Source: http://www.tampabay.com/news/publicsafety/accidents/article999112.ece

5. May 7, Minot Daily News – (North Dakota) Engines put in path of train carrying hazardous materials. Authorities are investigating a dangerous incident over the weekend in Minot involving a pair of CP Railway locomotives. Sometime between the hours of 3:30 and 5 a.m. on May 3, someone made entry into two locomotives that were parked on siding tracks near the 1100 block of Eastern Avenue. The suspect then took the controls of the lead locomotive, which was hooked to the second locomotive, and moved both onto the main rail line just east of the crossing at Eighth Avenue Southeast and into the eventual path of an eastbound freight train carrying hazardous materials, including anhydrous ammonia. The engineer of the eastbound train was able to spot the locomotives ahead and quickly activated the emergency brake, bringing the train to a stop with only 100 feet to spare, according to Minot police. A CP Railway statement obtained May 6 by the Minot Daily News placed the distance at 400 feet, however. The incident is being treated as a very serious situation in Minot, since it almost certainly would have caused a major derailment and the potential release of a large amount of hazardous materials. According to police docket entries, some specialized equipment
was needed to perform the necessary actions to move the locomotives, thus raising the possibility of the suspect being an employee of CP Rail.
Source: http://www.minotdailynews.com/page/content.detail/id/527745.html?nav=5010

6. **May 7, Associated Press – (Utah) Feds assess explosives left at Cook’s plant.** Federal authorities are assessing a cleanup plan for a former congressman’s abandoned mining-explosives factory in Utah County. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said Thursday there is no immediate danger of an explosion at Cook Slurry Co., but chemicals left behind could put growing subdivisions at Saratoga Springs at risk. The EPA has taken keys to the property, double-locked gates, posted caution signs, and is warning neighbors who live as close as half a mile from the plant. The EPA has not removed any of the chemicals — mainly ammonium nitrate and diesel fuel in separate tanks. But the landowner, a state agency that locked out the former congressman from the site in a lease dispute last summer, said some cleanup will be necessary before it can sell the 480 acres. Last month, an EPA emergency-response coordinator told the Associated Press he was particularly concerned about a 20,000-gallon tank filled with what appears to be explosive slurry. The agency has yet to confirm the contents of that tank.
Source: http://www.abc4.com/content/news/slc/story/Feds-assess-explosives-left-at-Cooks-plant/9TblBCEoKU-6zAPmV9C2mQ.cspx

For more stories, see items 26 and 31

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

7. **May 8, Monroe News – (Michigan) Fermi 2 waste facility under way.** Construction is under way on a thick concrete slab at DTE Energy’s Fermi 2 nuclear power plant that will form the base of an outside storage area for tons of highly radioactive used fuel from the reactor. The utility says it needs to store the nuclear waste in casks outdoors to ease crowding in a spent-fuel storage pool inside the plant’s reactor building and provide long-term storage in the absence of a national nuclear waste disposal facility. But environmentalists say there are risks in outside storage on a site next to Lake Erie and they question the safety and integrity of the large casks in which the fuel will be stored. One group, Beyond Nuclear, filed a petition the evening of May 7, calling for DTE to do a variety of security and safety assessments for its planned outside storage facility. The group includes local residents. DTE will take delivery later this year of the first of 12 casks made by Holtec International. Sometime next year, before a scheduled refueling of the reactor, the first used fuel assemblies from the reactor will be loaded into six of the casks and placed on the concrete pad, a DTE spokesman said. Construction of the pad, 12 casks and related equipment cost about $62.5 million. Now, legislation has been proposed in Lansing that would redirect waste disposal surcharges from Michigan customers to an escrow account rather than to the federal government until the repository becomes a reality. But even if the repository opened tomorrow, waste from Fermi likely would never be stored there because the capacity is not enough to hold all the waste from all the nation’s nuclear plants.
8. *May 8, Fort Worth Star Telegram* – (Texas) **Storm forces Comanche Peak nuclear power plant to reduce output.** The Comanche Peak nuclear power plant has significantly curtailed generation at one of its two units in recent days as a result of damage wrought by a thunderstorm on May 2. It represents an “unusual” situation whereby the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), operator of the power grid serving 75 percent of the state, asked Luminant Generation to reduce electricity generation from Comanche Peak, an ERCOT spokeswoman said May 7. As a result of the storm, there was a failed breaker, and it knocked out two transmission lines, the spokesman said. One of the two large lines could not be returned to service. “That created congestion on the ERCOT transmission network,” she said. “So ERCOT operators had to ask Comanche Peak to reduce its output.” The plant’s Comanche Peak One unit scaled back from 100 percent to 76 percent of capacity, a Luminant spokeswoman said. Each of the plant’s two units can produce 1,150 megawatts of electricity. ERCOT is working with Oncor Electric Delivery, the electric transmission and distribution company serving much of North Texas, to ensure that the failed breaker is repaired, she said. Repairs are expected to be completed soon.


9. *May 8, Orange County Register* – (California) **Edison offers plan for safer practices at nuclear plant.** In response to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s stern warnings seeking prompt action to cure persistent systemic problems at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, operators of the plant at a packed public meeting in Dana Point Thursday promised corrective action and sweeping changes to ensure safe performance. “We’re committed to improving our human performance and problem identification issues at the plant,” said a senior vice president and chief nuclear officer for Southern California Edison, which operates the generating station that employs up to 2,600 people. Nuclear regulators pressed Edison officials hard saying that they had heard similar statements before with little action to correct deficiencies noted months ago and outlined again in the NRC’s annual assessment of the plant. “But in recent inspections we don’t see the results,” said the deputy director of the NRC’s division of reactor projects in region 4, which covers plants west of the Mississippi. “Until performance does improve, what the NRC will do is inspect more to make sure that San Onofre will be operating safely.” “Although SONGS Units 2 and 3 operated in a manner that preserved public health and safety…the NRC is concerned that continuing performance problems are not being effectively addressed,” says the NRC’s annual assessment letter to SCE. This is the third time that these problems have been identified, and that SCE has tried to fix them. San Onofre is among the 17 percent of America’s nuclear reactors requiring more intense attention from federal regulators.


10. *May 8, Reuters* – (Georgia) **Southern Ga. Hatch 1 reactor starts to exit outage.** Southern Co’s 876-megawatt Unit 1 at the Hatch nuclear power station in Georgia started to exit an outage and ramped up to 1 percent by early on May 8, the U.S. Nuclear
Regulatory Commission said in a report. The unit shut by May 4 due to a problem with a safety relief valve.


Critical Manufacturing Sector

11. *May 8, Reliable Plant* – (Ohio) **EPA case will cost National Lime and Stone $168K.**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 has reached an agreement with National Lime and Stone Company on alleged Clean Air Act violations at the company’s non-metallic mineral processing plant on North Patterson Street in Carey, Ohio. The agreement includes a $13,000 penalty and two environmental projects costing $155,000. The agreement resolves EPA allegations that National failed to comply with federal and state regulations and its state operating permit by emitting excessive amounts of volatile organic compounds and carbon monoxide from its pelletized limestone dryer. EPA said the alleged violations occurred from November 2003 through October 2007. For its first environmental project, National will replace a diesel engine with electrical power to eliminate diesel emissions at its facility. For its second project, the company will replace its existing baghouse with a larger, more efficient baghouse for collecting fugitive dust in the loading and material handling area of its dried stone operation.


12. *May 5, Associated Press* – (Nevada) **Newmont gold mine evacuated in northeast Nevada after power problem; all 79 miners OK.** Dozens of miners safely evacuated a gold mine in northeast Nevada on May 5 after a flash in the mine’s electrical system triggered the emergency response, the company said. All 79 of the miners were accounted for and no injuries were reported at the Leeville mine, said a spokeswoman for Newmont Mining Corp. of Denver. It owns and operates the mine in Eureka County, about 300 miles northeast of Reno. One of the miners observed the flash about 5:30 a.m. at an electrical load center, or surge protector, for the 480 volts of power running into the mine. The load center is about 1,500 feet below the mine surface. Crews followed standard procedure in releasing a “stench” — a powerful odor to alert miners to report to underground safety bunkers that have communication links to the surface, she said. Rescue teams then inspected three load centers and determined about 10 a.m. that it was safe for the miners to return to the surface through a mine shaft.

Defense Industrial Base Sector

13. May 6, Washington Post – (Virginia) **Contractor will cease tests after day-care blast outcry.** A defense contractor, BAE Systems, said May 6 that it will cease testing at its offices in Alexandria where a cannon explosion on May 4 damaged a neighboring day-care center and forced the evacuation of more than 70 children. “It is not our practice to put people in harm’s way,” said a BAE spokesman. “We have made a decision to immediately and permanently stop these types of operations at that site.” The company will still test its products at other sites but will stop that type of research at the Duke Street location because “it is the right thing to do.” The company will continue other types of work at the Duke Street site.

Source: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/06/AR2009050602210.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/06/AR2009050602210.html)

Banking and Finance Sector

14. May 8, Wall Street Journal – (National) **Fed sees up to $599 billion in bank losses.** The federal government projected that 19 of the nation’s biggest banks could suffer losses of up to $599 billion through the end of next year if the economy performs worse than expected and ordered 10 of them to raise a combined $74.6 billion in capital to cushion themselves. The much-anticipated stress-test results unleashed a scramble by the weakest banks to find money and a push by the strongest ones to escape the government shadow of taxpayer-funded rescues. The Federal Reserve’s worst-case estimates of banks’ total losses and capital shortfalls were smaller than some had feared. Optimists interpreted the Fed’s findings as evidence that the worst is over for the industry. But questions remain about the stress tests’ rigor, in part since the Fed scaled back some projected losses in the face of pressure from banks. The government’s tests measured potential losses on mortgages, commercial loans, securities and other assets held by the stress-tested banks, ranging from giants Bank of America Corp. and Citigroup Inc. to regional institutions such as SunTrust Banks Inc. and Fifth Third Bancorp. The government’s “more adverse” scenario includes two-year cumulative losses of 9.1 percent on total loans, worse than the peak losses of the 1930s. The Treasury Secretary said on May 7 that he is “reasonably confident” that banks will be able to plug the capital holes through private infusions, alleviating the need for Washington to further enmesh itself in the banking system. Banks also said they will consider selling businesses or issuing new stock to meet the toughened capital standards.

Source: [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124172137962697121.html](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124172137962697121.html)

15. May 8, Bloomberg – (National) **FDIC chief wants an agency for risk monitoring.** The chairwoman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. urged Congress on May 7 to create a U.S. authority to unwind failing “systemically important” firms and avoid bailouts for companies whose collapse would disrupt the financial system. “Lack of an effective resolution mechanism for large financial organizations is driving many of our policy choices,” the chairwoman said at a Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago conference. “It has
contributed to unprecedented government intervention into private companies. We need a new resolution regime that minimizes the economic impact of the failure of a large, complex financial institution.” The chairwoman is seeking new powers to seize the holding companies of U.S. lenders, expanding her agency’s authority to close the banks and savings and loans that take deposits and make loans. Such power would let the agency shield taxpayers from losses when government steps in to prevent companies from failing and disrupting the financial system, she said recently. The chairwoman urged lawmakers to give her agency the authority while testifying to a Senate Banking Committee hearing on May 7 as Congress prepares to write legislation overhauling U.S. rules regulating Wall Street.

Source: http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2009/05/08/fdic_chief_wants_an_agency_for_risk_monitoring/

16. May 7, WUPL 54 New Orleans – (Louisiana) **Scammers try to steal credit card info through phone calls.** A phone and text scam is sweeping the New Orleans area seeking social security and credit card numbers. A representative of the Better Business Bureau has stated that it is a phishing scam attempting to steal people’s personal information. This latest version claims it was sent by the Jefferson Financial Credit Union. FBI agents said it is a common strategy used by con artists across the country. They often hide behind a legitimate financial institutions name, and even logo. “In the past year, we’ve seen a number of banks have been targeted,” said a FBI special agent. “I do know that we’ve seen about a 33 percent increase in Internet fraud and identity theft in general in the past year alone. Officials with Jefferson Financial Credit Union stress that the messages are not coming from their institution.


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**Transportation Sector**

17. May 8, Charlotte Observer – (North Carolina) **Kannapolis ‘bomb’ was hoax.** Kannapolis police say the suspicious device that forced the closure of a main thoroughfare and the evacuation of several buildings Friday morning was a hoax. The device was spotted about 6 a.m. by a Kannapolis police officer on patrol, near North Main and West 17th streets. Police say the device had a timer and blinking lights and was held together by black masking tape. Authorities closed North Main Street between 16th and 22nd streets, and adjacent Linda Avenue. And since the device was found near railroad tracks, authorities stopped an Amtrak train — bound from Charlotte to New York with more than 200 passengers — about 10 miles south of Kannapolis. The train resumed its trip about 10 a.m., when police determined the device was not a threat. Kannapolis police evacuated several businesses and residences along North Main Street. NewsChannel 36, the Observer’s news partner, said police also asked residents and employees of businesses elsewhere within a quarter-mile of the site to remain indoors. “The device was rendered safe in place by the bomb squad,” a sergeant of the Kannapolis Police Department told NewsChannel 36. “It was a hoax. But we have to take these matters seriously.”
18. **May 8, Baltimore Sun** – (Maryland) **Bridge in Arbutus set for rehabilitation.** The State Highway Administration (SHA) said May 7 that it will launch a $1.3 million project this month to rehabilitate the bridge carrying U.S.1 over Sulphur Spring Road in Arbutus. The project, which will begin about the middle of this month and continue until next spring, will reduce U.S. 1 to two lanes of traffic — one in each direction — in the work zone just north of the Halethorpe MARC train station. The agency is urging MARC riders to allow for extra time to get to the station while the project continues. An SHA spokesman said the bridge was built in 1947 and rehabilitated in 1978. He said the project involves full replacement of the deck, rather than a simple resurfacing, as well as other rehabilitation work. He said the piers that provide structural support for the bridge do not need replacement.

Source: [http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore_county/bal-md.briefs083may08,0,1767520.story](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore_county/bal-md.briefs083may08,0,1767520.story)

19. **May 8, KARE 11 Minneapolis** – (Minnesota) **Lafayette Bridge plans take shape in St. Paul.** The 41-year-old span over the Mississippi River is slated for replacement because it is a “fracture critical” bridge that has had history of steel fatigue in places. “The deck or the driving surface on this bridge is in a condition that needs to be replaced or repaired,” an MnDOT engineer said, “And it just doesn’t make any sense to repair it on a fracture critical bridge. We would prefer to replace the entire bridge.” Construction is currently set to being in the winter of 2010-2011, earlier than originally expected due in large part to influx of new gas tax money. “When we replace that bridge we’re going to replace it with a bridge that’s structurally redundant, so it’s a situation similar to the new 35W,” a spokesperson explained. “In addition to that we’re going to have wider shoulders to accommodate bus shoulders and transit.” Much like the old 35-W bridge that collapsed in Minneapolis in 2007, the Lafayette is not “structurally redundant” in engineering terms. It relies on two steel girders for support, so if one were to fail, the bridge would be in jeopardy of dipping, buckling or partially collapsing.


20. **May 7, Santa Rosa Press Democrat** – (California) **Plane crash-lands at Sonoma County Airport.** Three Sonoma County residents walked away from the crash of a small plane May 7 at Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport, after the aircraft lost power approaching the main runway. “The engine quit and we landed just short of the runway,” said the pilot. The plane’s wheels dug into the mud and the aircraft nosed into the ground, coming to rest upside down near the south end of the airport. The pilot and his passengers emerged shaken but unhurt, he said. The single-engine Cessna 210 was coming in for a landing at about 2:30 p.m. The pilot and his passengers had flown to Quincy in Plumas County in the morning and were returning home when the crash-landing occurred.

21. **May 7, SC Magazine** – (National) **Report: Web app hacks can invade air traffic control systems.** Web applications that are used to support the operations of the nation’s air traffic control (ATC) systems are not properly secured nor configured to prevent attacks or improper access, and the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) lacks robust intrusion detection, concluded a government report released the week of May 4. The report, written by the assistant inspector general for financial and information technology audits at the U.S. Department of Transportation, said the FAA is experiencing the same problem many critical infrastructure providers have when they try to interconnect their networks-in this case, the FAA’s administrative and ATC networks. “While use of commercial IP products, such as web applications, has enabled [the] FAA to efficiently collect and disseminate information to facilitate ATC services, it inevitably poses a higher security risk to ATC systems than when they were developed primarily with proprietary software,” the report said. “Now, attackers can take advantage of software vulnerabilities in commercial IP products to exploit ATC systems, which is especially worrisome at a time when the nation is facing increased threats from sophisticated nation-state-sponsored cyberattacks.” In one 2006 case, the report said, a virus spread from the agency’s administrative networks, forcing the shutdown of some of its ATC systems in Alaska. And during its tests, the report said the investigators gained access to an ATC system that controlled power supplies at six centers. The FAA, though, disagreed with the report’s claim that ATC systems had been compromised, and that someone could jump to the ATC network via the administrative network. Source: [http://www.scmagazineus.com/Report-Web-app-hacks-can-invade-air-traffic-control-systems/article/136440/](http://www.scmagazineus.com/Report-Web-app-hacks-can-invade-air-traffic-control-systems/article/136440/)

22. **May 7, KSTP 5 Minneapolis** – (Minnesota) **House passes stiffer punishments for laser-aircraft incidents.** On May 7, the state House voted 129 to 3 to pass a measure making it a gross misdemeanor to intentionally point a laser at moving aircraft. Currently, federal law prohibits this dangerous behavior for larger airplanes, but the crime has been rarely prosecuted at the federal level. In an effort to prevent laser-induced aircraft accidents, the bill passed by state lawmakers would give police the right to arrest and prosecute any person knowingly discharging a laser at an airplane. “Currently there is not a state law. You could point an over the counter laser right into the cockpit of a moving plane, put people’s lives at risk, and never be prosecuted,” said a House member. There have been recent cases in Minnesota where persons admitted to aiming lasers at moving aircraft and knew it was wrong but were not prosecuted. The Senate is expected to approve the measure with similar support before it is sent to the Governor for final approval. Source: [http://kstp.com/article/stories/S920657.shtml?cat=89](http://kstp.com/article/stories/S920657.shtml?cat=89)

For more stories, see items 3, 5, and 34

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**Postal and Shipping Sector**

23. **May 8, Loveland Reporter Herald** – (Colorado) **White powder discovered in mailbox appears to be harmless.** Fire crews were called out to a north Loveland mobile home
complex to investigate a suspicious white powder a postal worker found in a mailbox, but the powder appeared to be harmless, authorities said. The bag of powder, found around noon in a mailbox on West Apple Drive — near the 500 block of West 57th Street — tested negative for methamphetamine and cocaine and did not have the appearance of anthrax, said a deputy with the Larimer County Sheriff’s Office. A postal worker picking up and delivering mail found the bag, the sheriff deputy said, and called 911. Loveland Fire and Rescue crews responded, along with the sheriff’s office. The sheriff deputy said he would pack up the powder, about one-fourth cup worth, and send it to the Colorado Bureau of Investigation to determine what the substance is. Source: http://www.reporterherald.com/news_story.asp?ID=23015

Agriculture and Food Sector

24. May 7, USA Today – (National) **FDA failing to meet food-safety inspection audit goals.** The Food and Drug Administration is failing to meet its goals for auditing food-safety inspections that states do on its behalf, FDA data show. The FDA fell short of its goal in at least 17 of 39 states it paid to do inspections in the 2007-08 contract year, according to data the FDA gave USA Today. In five states, the FDA did no audits. State agencies do half the FDA’s food inspections. The FDA aims to audit 7 percent to help make sure states do good inspections. The FDA’s performance has improved. Its data for the 2006-07 year show its audit goal was unmet in 21 of 37 states. In eight states, no audits were done. In 1998, the FDA did no audits in 21 of 38 states, said the Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General in a 2000 report. The quality of state inspections came under scrutiny this year during the salmonella outbreak traced to Peanut Corp. of America’s plant in Georgia. The state’s agriculture department found minor issues in 2007 and 2008 when it inspected the plant for the FDA. The FDA cited serious deficiencies when it inspected PCA this year. The states that were not audited in 2007-08 were Maryland, Wyoming, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska. Source: http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/food/2009-05-06-fda-food-safety-inspection-audits_N.htm

25. May 7, Associated Press – (Tennessee) **FDA seizes food products from Memphis warehouse.** Federal authorities have seized $1.5 million worth of herbs, spices and other food products stored at a warehouse run by a Memphis company. The Food and Drug Administration said May 7 that American Mercantile Corp. failed to clean up a warehouse that was found contaminated by insects and rodents during an inspection in March. According to its Internet site, American Mercantile imports and processes bulk natural products such as spices, herbs, oils and seasonings. The FDA said the products seized under a federal court warrant were “stored under filthy conditions.” The federal agency said it had no reports of illness associated with products handled by American Mercantile. Source: http://www.wztv.com/template/inews_wire/wires.regional.tn/32b7e3da-www.fox17.com.shtml

26. May 6, Associated Press – (Indiana) **Police arrest 2 in Evansville ammonia leak.**
Police have arrested two Evansville men accused of trying to steal anhydrous ammonia, causing a leak that sickened 21 people in the Ohio River city. A Vanderburgh County Jail officer said the two men were being held on May 6 on preliminary charges of theft and criminal recklessness. The leak occurred about 10 p.m. April 24 at Superior Ag Resources Co-op on Evansville’s west side. Seven people were taken to St. Mary’s Medical Center and 14 were taken to Deaconess Hospital after inhaling the fumes. All were treated and released. Authorities say the men intended to steal the chemical and sell it to methamphetamine makers. Anhydrous ammonia is a key component in the production of meth. Thefts occur regularly at farms and their suppliers.


Water Sector

27. *May 7, Water Technology Online* – (National) **$615.8M for rural water projects:** USDA. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced that it has allocated $615.8 million for more than 190 water and environmental projects in rural communities in 34 states through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (federal stimulus package), the American Water Works Association (AWWA) reported on May 4. The Agriculture Secretary said the funds would create or save 12,385 jobs in those towns. He noted, “Aging water and waste infrastructure systems threaten the ability of rural communities to provide clean, reliable drinking water to residents and protect precious environmental resources.” Funding of individual recipients is contingent upon their meeting the terms of the loan or grant agreement, AWWA reported. The funding is available through USDA Rural Development’s Water and Environmental Program.


28. *May 7, Washington Post* – (Maryland; National) **As inspections dwindled, water main breaks rose.** During a decade marked by a record number of water main breaks, the utility that delivers water to Montgomery and Prince George’s counties in Maryland severely cut back on inspections of its largest concrete pipes and failed to spend all the money it had to replace parts of its antiquated system, its records show. Some of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission’s (WSSC) biggest pipes have been inspected just once or twice in the past three decades, although WSSC officials said they should be scrutinized every five years. The 66-inch main that exploded along River Road in the winter, forcing helicopter rescues of drivers stranded in the torrent, had not been inspected in 10 years, WSSC officials said. WSSC officials blame the inspection cuts on funding shortages earlier this decade. But ample funding in recent years did not help it keep up with replacing worn-out pipes. Although the WSSC had $130.6 million to replace 108 miles of water pipe over the past four fiscal years, it completed 81 miles. In one year, the utility replaced 16.6 miles of pipe, although it was budgeted for 27. The unspent money was returned to its general fund. The WSSC’s troubles are symptomatic of a national problem. Out of sight and out of mind, underground pipes receive little attention until fire hydrants go dry or water gushes into basements. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that 240,000 water mains break nationwide.
every year. Montgomery and Prince George’s council members are scheduled to approve a WSSC budget that would raise rates 9 percent. It would slightly increase the pipe replacement and inspection budget for a 5,500-mile system whose mains have been breaking with increasing frequency. Last year, about 1,700 pipes leaked or broke, and a 90-year record was set in 2007 with 2,129.

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/06/AR2009050604214.html?wprss=rss_business

29. May 7, WDSU 6 New Orleans – (Louisiana) I-Team investigates sulfuric acid leak.
An industrial pipeline is leaching sulfur into a Plaquemines Parish waterway, prompting around the clock efforts to stop the leak and rid the canal of contaminants. A spokeswoman told a WDSU reporter she became concerned when her husband noticed bright light coming from behind the levee near their Port Sulphur home. A closer inspection revealed the light came from hazardous materials crews working around the clock on a pumping project at the canal. She called parish officials. A department spokesman explained that under certain conditions, sulfur “can create a byproduct which turns out to be sulfuric acid.” Freeport McMoRan is treating the contaminated water with lime to neutralize the acid. The company is also installing a new drainage line. The company issued a statement urging residents to keep clear of the drainage canal until work is completed. Department of Environmental Quality officials believe the water should be safe within a week.


The Navy announced that on April 6 its water system “violated a drinking water standard” when one of its six filter units “failed to operate properly.” Although the problem has been corrected, the Navy stated that island residents, particularly those receiving Navy water on the Navy base and the villages of Agat, Santa Rita, Piti, Nimitz Hill and parts of Asan and Maina, have the right to know. “On April 6, 2009, for a brief period at approximately 5 a.m., the turbidity in the combined filtered water of the Navy Water Treatment Plant was 1.5 (Nephelometric Turbidity Units),” according to the Navy announcement. The Guam Primary Safe Drinking Water regulations require that the turbidity in a drinking water plant’s combined filtered water does not exceed 1 NTU, the maximum allowable turbidity, according to the Navy. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. The problem has been fixed, so there is no need to boil water, according to the advertisement in the May 6 edition Pacific Daily News.

Source: http://www.guampdn.com/article/20090507/NEWS01/905070313/1002/Navy+reports+violation+of+drinking+water+rules

31. May 7, KGBT 10 San Diego – (California) Worker hurt in Otay Reservoir chemical spill. Thousands of gallons of lye poured out of a holding tank at a municipal water-treatment plant at Otay Reservoir May 7, injuring an employee and prompting the closure of the facility while crews cleaned up the chemical spill. The worker, a city technician, was installing instrumentation equipment at the Wueste Road complex when the sodium hydroxide began spilling out of the containment system about 11:30 a.m.,
splashing her in the face, according to the San Diego Water and Fire-Rescue departments. Medics treated the woman at the scene, and then took her to the University of California, San Diego Medical Center in Hillcrest for further care and evaluation. A hazardous-materials team was called in to oversee the cleanup of the roughly 4,000 gallons of spilled liquid. The chemical, also known as caustic soda, drained into an overflow reservoir designed for such accidents, said the spokesman for the San Diego Water Department. City officials decided to shut down the plant as a safety precaution while the lye was recovered, he said. The cause of the mishap was under investigation, according to the spokesman.


Public Health and Healthcare Sector

32. May 6, Associated Press – (Texas) Bill would bar information on deadly agents. The Texas Senate has approved legislation that would keep state laboratories’ information on “select agents” such as the Ebola virus, anthrax and other deadly substances off limits to the public. A Republican senator from Houston, who is pressing for the legislation, contends that release of the information would pose a threat to homeland security because the materials are potential bioterrorism agents. Under the proposal approved May 6, the Texas Public Information Act would be amended to keep that information off limits, as the federal law does. The legislation now goes to the House. The University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston’s National Lab researches such substances and has received an open records request.


33. May 6, Associated Press – (Maine) Health facility evacuated after reports of fumes. A health care facility in Portland that was evacuated following employee complaints of nausea and lightheadedness closed for the day for environmental tests. Officials told the Portland Press Herald that some of the 14 people who became sick May 6 at Martin’s Point Health Center were suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning linked to a malfunction in the building’s furnace. Nine people were transported to the emergency room at Maine Medical Center and five were treated at the scene. A Martin’s Point spokeswoman said everyone seems to be doing OK. Firefighters detected no abnormal levels of carbon monoxide in the building and said it was safe to re-enter. About 100 people work at the clinic. No patients were affected by the fumes.


For another story, see item 42

Government Facilities Sector

34. May 7, Associated Press – (International) U.S. Navy ship avoids pirate attack. The
U.S. Navy says an American warship that recently served as a prison for captured pirates has evaded an attack off the Somali coast by two boats that pursued the vessel for over an hour and fired light weapons. A spokesman for the Navy’s 5th Fleet says the pirates closed within about a mile of the USNS Lewis and Clark on May 6 before the logistics support ship increased speed and used evasive maneuvers to escape. The spokesman said May 7 the attack took place about 100 miles off the eastern coast of Somalia. The pirates fired “small arms weapons” but they fell short of the ship. The Lewis and Clark was sailing to the Gulf of Aden with supplies for Navy ships patrolling the pirate-infested area.


35. May 7, WHAM 13 Canandaigua – (New York) Investigating the suicide at Canandaigua school. Conflicting images are emerging about the teen who shot and killed himself May 5 at Canandaigua Academy in Canandaigua. He was considered personable and funny, and got good grades. The victim’s family is grieving for the outgoing son who had plans for college. School officials said the victim recently completed a four-month, in-school suspension program after he was allegedly caught smoking pot before school. Friends and others told police the victim was angry about the punishment, which he thought was too severe. They said he talked openly about “wanting revenge.” Police had a chance to look at surveillance video. They said it appears that the teen brought ammunition and explosives devices into the school in a duffle bag that he stashed in his locker. Police said, later in the day, the teen retrieved the shotgun from his car wrapped in blue jeans. He took it directly into a bathroom where he shot himself. Police also went to the student’s home and confiscated his computer. They found evidence that he visited “Columbine-type” Web sites. They have also taken some of his drawings, described as “dark and disturbing.” Canandaigua’s Chief of Police said, “We recovered some disturbing documents and we’re in the process of reviewing them and [his] personal computer for any information. It’s a two-pronged theory to find out what triggered this event, so hopefully we can prevent it in the future. But also, that extra layer of protection to ensure that no other students were speaking with him and had the same motive.” After interviewing the victim’s friends and other students, police say they do not believe any one else was involved in the incident.


36. May 6, Minneapolis Star Tribune – (Minnesota) 30 protesters arrested at federal immigration office in Bloomington. Bloomington police on May 6 arrested 30 people who tried to block access to a federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office to protest raids and deportations. The protest was organized by the Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action coalition (MIRAc), which says deportations tear families apart. Their action was part of a nationwide effort to shut down ICE offices through civil disobedience. The Bloomington police commander said protesters gathered about 7 a.m. at the ICE headquarters and obeyed the law until a few began blocking driveways and entrances. Those who refused to disperse were arrested without incident about 9:50 a.m.,
the police commander said. They were cited for misdemeanor trespassing and disorderly conduct.
Source: http://www.startribune.com/local/west/44503912.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7_V_nDa yeUit3aPe:_Yyc:aULPQL7PQLanchO7DiUr

Emergency Services Sector

37. May 8, News Tribune – (Washington) **911 center needs help, audit says.** Call-takers at the major 911 center for Pierce County handle more than double the state’s average number of calls. And while they have gotten faster in recent years, they still do not meet the national standard of answering 9 of 10 calls within 10 seconds. Those are two of the findings from an independent performance audit of the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) released May 6 to the News Tribune. The agency is both underfunded and understaffed, the 234-page report concluded. Officials from the city-county agency appeared before a Tacoma City Council subcommittee on May 6, seeking changes to the operating agreement with the city. The proposed changes would save the agency only about $300,000 starting next year and will not be enough to prevent further layoffs at LESA this summer, and with them a potential drop in service, they said. “You can only tweak a Model T so much,” the LESA director said in an interview on May 7. “Frankly, we need more people.” The audit found LESA is already near the bottom of the similar-sized agencies across the country for call response times.

Information Technology

38. May 7, Los Angeles Times – (International) **Mygener.im bug spreads on Facebook.** The phishing bug that bit many Facebook users the week of April 27 is beginning to resurface on May 8. Facebook users are receiving messages from friends that ask them to visit the website, mygener.im. The site is marked as malicious in most modern browsers, so curious wanderers will receive a warning when attempting to visit the link. For those daring enough to continue on, the site redirects users through a series of Web domains, eventually landing on, at least for now, an address that does not seem to point anywhere. The most recent incident appears to be directly related to the phishing outbreak that spread the week of April 27 when some Facebook users were duped into giving their passwords to scammers, a Facebook spokesman wrote in an e-mail. “We’ve already blocked the URL from being shared on Facebook and it is now being deleted from inboxes and walls across the site,” the spokesman wrote. “Anyone who…shared this content will soon have their account password automatically reset.”

39. May 7, CNET News – (International) **Google issues, then reissues Chrome security**
fix. Google fixed security holes with a new release of its stable version of Chrome, then released a replacement shortly afterward to prevent a batch of crashes that turned up as well. Chrome 1.0.154.64 emerged on May 5 and was intended to fix one critical security problem and one high-severity one. On May 7, came 1.0.154.65 to fix a crash during startup that affected “a small percentage of users,” said the Chrome Program Manager. With the first problem, an attacker under some circumstances could run attack software with the same privilege as the computer user. With the second, an issue handling 2D graphics could potentially allow a specially crafted image to crash a tab and run an attacker’s code within Chrome’s sandbox security isolation system.


40. May 7, Security Wire Daily News – (International) Microsoft to patch critical PowerPoint zero-day flaw. Microsoft plans to issue one critical patch during its monthly patch cycle the week of May 11, plugging a critical flaw in its PowerPoint presentation program that is being actively targeted by attackers. The PowerPoint vulnerability was the only bulletin identified in the Security Bulletin Advance Notification issued on May 7 by Microsoft. Details of the flaw surfaced last month and Microsoft acknowledged that the flaw was being exploited by hackers in the wild in targeted, limited attacks. PowerPoint versions affected by the flaw are Office PowerPoint 2000 Service Pack 3, Office PowerPoint 2002 Service Pack 3, and Office PowerPoint 2003 Service Pack 3. In a Microsoft Security Advisory issued April 2, the software giant said the flaw could allow remote code execution if a user is tricked into opening a malicious PowerPoint file. The malicious PowerPoint files identified by some security vendors contain a Trojan dropper embedded within the presentation. The file can be passed via an email message with a malicious PowerPoint attachment or by tricking users to view a malicious website containing a Trojan downloader. “If a user is logged on with administrative user rights, an attacker could take complete control of the affected system,” Microsoft said in its advisory. Until a patch is released, Microsoft has issued guidance, recommending that organizations could temporarily force all PowerPoint files to open in the Microsoft Isolated Conversion Environment (MOICE). Companies that have migrated to the newer XML file format can temporarily disable the binary file format using the FileBlock registry configuration. As it does every month, Microsoft said it would also update its Windows Malicious Software Removal Tool.

Source: http://searchsecurity.techtarget.com/news/article/0,289142,sid14_gci1355904,00.html

41. May 7, ChannelWeb – (International) Virtualized systems can be a security risk: analyst. With companies looking for ways to cut their IT infrastructure costs, there is no hotter technology right now than virtualization. But those cost savings could carry a big price in compromised security if IT managers are not careful. That was the message from a Gartner Fellow in his “Securing Virtualization, Virtualizing Security” presentation the week of May 4 at Everything Channel’s Midsize Enterprise Summit in Miami. The Fellow’s argument is that most virtual machines being deployed by IT departments currently are not as secure as physical systems. Not that virtualization is inherently less secure, the Fellow was careful to say, but most virtualization technology is not being deployed in a secure way. Several times during his presentation the Fellow
argued that many suppliers of virtualization and security technology are not providing the same kinds of protection they provide for physical systems. “The bad news is most of the big guys are still missing in action,” he said.

Source: http://www.crn.com/security/217300745;jsessionid=MXPQYPG3CX5OQQSNLPSK
HSCJUNN2JVN

For another story, see item 21

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/.

Communications Sector

Nothing to report

Commercial Facilities Sector

42. May 7, Baltimore Examiner – (Maryland) Explosion a good reminder there are no ‘routine’ calls. The fire and emergency services community in Maryland was spared a tragedy on May 7 when eight Prince Georges County firefighters narrowly escaped with their lives following a massive explosion at the scene of a gas leak in a row of commercial occupancies at the Pen Mar Shopping Center in Forestville. Firefighters responded to 3426 Donnell Drive shortly before 1 p.m. for a reported odor of gas. While investigating the incident, crews had evacuated citizens from several stores in a strip-mall and a pair of firefighters were approaching the building when an explosion suddenly occurred, showering bricks, glass and other debris into the parking area in front of the complex. A flash fire caused flames and smoke to blow through the roof and fire officials called a “mayday”, bringing additional EMS units to the scene from PG County and the District of Columbia Fire Department. Published reports indicate a Washington Gas employee was working on a gas line at the shopping complex when the explosion occurred. Several stores were significantly damaged or destroyed as a result of the explosion. Businesses in the complex included a pregnancy center, several restaurants, a nail salon, a medical office, and at least one vacant storefront.

Source: http://www.examiner.com/x-10311-Baltimore-Emergency-Services-Examiner~y2009m5d7-Explosion-a-good-reminder-there-are-no-routine-calls

43. May 7, Treasure Coast Palm – (Florida) Faulty radiation meter used on package heightened scare at PSL Holiday Inn. A bomb scare and the possibility of a radiation
leak the evening of May 7 forced guests at the Holiday Inn on U.S. 1 in Port St. Lucie out of their rooms for more than five hours; but no bomb, no radiation and no injuries were reported. Emergency medical personnel from the St. Lucie County Fire District were called to the hotel at 5:12 p.m. May 7 when a guest who said he had been exposed to radiation reported respiratory problems, according to the district’s public information officer. The cab driver who had brought him to the hotel told officials the man had claimed to have a bomb or radioactive material in his baggage, prompting firefighters and law enforcement officers to go door-to-door to evacuate the building. An initial check of the guest’s black, briefcase-type bag indicated “spiked” for radiation, an investigator said, but a second check with a different monitor did not. “It turns out the first monitor was faulty,” said the investigator. “There was not any radiation.” At 10 p.m., the bomb squad blew up one of the bags; officials did not say what they were going to do with the second bag. Officials later said one of the bags contained a cell phone charger and papers.


44. May 6, Associated Press – (South Dakota) Small fire forces evacuation of Pierre Building. Pierre firefighters put out a small fire early May 6 in the historic St. Charles Hotel. The fire chief says it appears to have started in a utility room and was contained to that space, but there was heavy smoke on the third and fourth floors of the five-story building. One of the building managers says 34 of the 35 apartments are occupied and about 70 people live there.


National Monuments & Icons Sector

45. May 8, FOX News – (New York) Statue of Liberty crown to reopen to tourists. Visitors will be able to climb into the crown of the Statue of Liberty beginning July 4, the Presidential Administration announced Friday. “On July 4th, we are giving American a special gift,” the Interior Secretary said in a press release. “We are once again inviting the public to celebrate our great nation and the hope and opportunity it symbolizes by climbing to Lady Liberty’s crown for a unique view of New York Harbor, where the forbears of millions of American families first saw the new world.” Visitors must use a narrow 168-step double-helix spiral staircase to gain access to the crown, which will be limited to 10 people at a time, guided by a National Park Service ranger. The crown was closed after the September 11th attacks because of concerns that it has no easy exit in case of emergency. The Interior Secretary said he based his decision on a thorough analysis of the entire structure completed last month by the National Park Service. “We cannot eliminate all the risk of climbing to the crown, but we are taking steps to make it safer,” the Interior Secretary said, adding that the steps include raising the handrails on the spiral staircase and stationing rangers throughout the statute to help visitors. The statute will be open for the next two years until it is closed again for work aiming to improve safety and security permanently, the Interior Secretary said.
Source: http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/05/08/statue-liberty-crown-reopen-tourists/

Dams Sector

46. **May 6, KHBS/KHOG 40/29 Fort Smith/Fayetteville** – (Arkansas) **Beaver Dam preps to open flood gates.** The rain in the forecast has people who live downstream from Beaver Dam worried. The dam holds in the water from Beaver Lake, and right now it is only about 5 feet short reaching flood stage. The levels of the lake have risen 5 feet over the past week, completely flooding the picnic area and other parts of the shore. A spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers does not think the Corps will have to drain as much water from the lake as it did last year, but the rain in the forecast could change that. He said, “We opened up all seven of our spillway gates and there is a chance we will have to do that again this spring.” He said if the gates do have to be opened, the Corps will notify the Carroll County judge, who will then let people know the waters are coming.

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