



Homeland  
Security

# Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report

## 14 March 2012

### Top Stories

- A fire at the idled Fort Calhoun nuclear power plant in 2011 briefly knocked out the cooling system for used fuel. Federal regulators said March 12 the incident represented a serious safety threat. – *Associated Press* (See item [8](#))
- Between December 6, 2011, and February, people used credit card numbers posted to the Web by a hacking group to make at least \$700,000 in unauthorized charges, the FBI reported. – *CNET News* (See item [15](#))
- Record floodwater inundated parts of southern Louisiana March 13 after intense rains caused flash flooding that deluged homes, closed dozens of roads, and prompted hundreds of rescues. – *CNN* (See item [19](#))
- Four planes that were struck by lightning in the Houston area March 9 were able to land without incident, said a Federal Aviation Administration representative. – *KHOU 11 Houston* (See item [20](#))
- A study, ordered by the California legislature, shows chemical fertilizers and livestock manure are the main source of nitrate contamination in groundwater for more than 1 million Californians. – *Associated Press* (See item [26](#))

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## Energy Sector

**Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: LOW, Cyber: LOW**

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

1. *March 13, Associated Press* – (Texas) **Lawnmower blamed in Texas petroleum company fire.** Investigators said a lawnmower and spilled fuel caused a fire that destroyed much of an East Texas petroleum company March 13. Hazardous materials crews spent March 13 at Pearce Petroleum Products in Mineola, Texas, for cleanup and removal of contaminated soil. The Wood County fire marshal said an employee was replacing the fuel filter and line on a riding lawnmower March 11 when some gasoline spilled. The worker was using ether to help start the mower when the engine backfired and the spilled fuel caught fire. The tank on a fuel delivery truck also ruptured and spilled. Fire department crews put out the fire in about an hour.  
Source: <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/state&id=8578879>
  
2. *March 13, Eugene Register Guard* – (Oregon) **Tanker overturns, spills fuel near river.** More than 4,000 gallons of gasoline and diesel spilled just 700 feet from the Middle Fork Willamette River after a tanker truck overturned on Highway 58 in Oakridge, Oregon, March 12, closing the road and forcing a temporary evacuation of 24 nearby homes. Crews worked to remove more than 5,000 gallons of fuel that remained in the tanker and to keep the spilled fuel from reaching the river. The highway was closed for more than 10 hours while gas was pumped from the truck so it could be righted and towed away. One lane of traffic was reopened nearly 11 hours after the initial crash. Absorbent booms and pads were placed in the ditch, the pond, and the creek to catch the fuel, and another boom was placed in the Middle Fork at the creek outfall.  
Source: <http://www.registerguard.com/web/newslocalnews/27753028-55/fuel-tank-truck-diesel-gallons.html.csp>

3. *March 12, Gloucester Times* – (Massachusetts) **Power restored after morning outage KOs 25,000.** A March 12 power outage that left 25,000 people without power on Cape Ann in Massachusetts, was caused by equipment failures in two different substations, one in East Beverly and the other in the same Gloucester substation that was shorted out in December 2011 by a wayward crow. A National Grid spokeswoman said that it seemed to be a coincidence that both failed at the same time, with the surge arrester in East Beverly and the insulator in Gloucester station both failing.  
Source: <http://www.gloucestertimes.com/local/x426438618/Power-restored-after-morning-outage-KOs-25-000>
4. *March 12, ProPublica* – (Texas) **BP off probation for Texas explosion, despite pending safety violations.** BP's refining subsidiary was released March 12 from criminal probation related to a 2005 explosion in Texas City, Texas, that killed 15 workers. The company addressed the most serious safety deficiencies exposed by the accident and satisfied the terms of a felony plea agreement to settle charges that it failed to protect workers from known risks, a U.S. Justice Department spokesman said. The move closes a controversial chapter for the company, but it leaves an array of worker-safety issues unresolved. BP is still negotiating over more than 400 additional violations brought against its Texas City refinery separately from the criminal case. Following the explosion, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and BP reached a settlement requiring the company to address safety issues at the refinery. Fixing those problems became one of the Justice Department's conditions for settling felony charges relating to the explosion and for ending the 3-year probation period.  
Source: <http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/bp-probation-texas-explosion-despite-pending-safety-violations>

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## **Chemical Industry Sector**

5. *March 13, Contra Costa Times* – (California) **Cummings Skyway in West Contra Costa reopens from rig crash and daylong blockage.** An oft-traveled link between Highway 4 and Interstate 80 in West Contra Costa County, California, was cleared of a day-long blockage after a tanker truck carrying chemicals overturned March 12, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) said. The rig crash initially elicited fears about a chemical spill, but the tanker stayed intact, the CHP said. The skyway was closed while crews worked to right the rig and clear it from the roadway. A fire captain said only small amounts of diesel fuel and a combustible liquid in the tanker leaked out and were cleaned up, noting that a local fire department and neighboring agencies responded. The tanker contained about 6,000 gallons of a combustible diesel additive. Authorities had to remove the fuel before righting the rig. The link was reopened after about 12 hours.  
Source: [http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_20156507/cummings-skyway-west-contra-costa-reopened-after-rig](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_20156507/cummings-skyway-west-contra-costa-reopened-after-rig)
6. *March 12, Associated Press* – (Michigan) **Dow Chemical Co. provides details of plan to clean dioxin-contaminated properties in Midland.** Dow Chemical Co. submitted a

plan for removing soils contaminated with dioxin from residential areas in Midland, Michigan, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) said March 12. If the DEQ approves, the plan will let Dow sample soil at up to 1,400 residential properties in Midland, home of its corporate headquarters. The city was polluted by airborne dioxin emissions from a chemical plant for much of the twentieth century. Properties with dioxin levels higher than 250 parts per trillion would be eligible for soil replacement and other work. Sampling would begin in June, and that and cleanup would be done only with the property owner's consent. Dow's proposal also has a schedule for the work, which is expected to last through 2017. The DEQ said it will accept comments through April 25, and will host a public hearing April 17.

Source:

<http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/55005f1d137a4b11a5ac28e5d892a13b/MI--Dow-Dioxin/>

7. *March 12, Augusta Chronicle* – (Georgia) **Industry settles emissions case with Georgia regulators.** An Augusta, Georgia chemical firm will pay fines totaling \$23,750 for excessive chemical emissions related to an ongoing equipment malfunction, according to Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (EPD). A consent order posted March 12 and dated February 29 said DSM Chemicals North America Inc. was in violation of its regulatory permit for exceedences of volatile organic compounds. The plant will also be required to make a series of repairs and conduct follow-up monitoring, the order said. The monitoring results will be reported to the EPD. DSM manufactures caprolactam and fertilizer products.

Source: <http://chronicle.augusta.com/latest-news/2012-03-12/industry-settles-emissions-case-georgia-regulators>

For another story, see item [9](#)

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

8. *March 12, Associated Press* – (Nebraska) **Feds: Nebraska nuke plant fire was serious threat.** A fire that briefly knocked out the cooling system for used fuel at the idled Fort Calhoun nuclear power plant north of Omaha, Nebraska, in June 2011 represented a serious safety threat, federal regulators said in a report March 12. The plant was shut down at the time of the fire, which started in an ill-fitting electrical breaker, and temperatures never exceeded safe levels, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) preliminary findings. However, it said the fire was considered a major concern because it could have happened any time and because workers did not fully investigate an unusual smell in the area 3 days earlier, which could have led them to discover the problem and prevent the fire. The fire started in an electrical breaker that had been replaced about 18 months earlier. A NRC spokeswoman said the new breaker had to be modified to fit the existing switches, and the breaker did not line up properly. That allowed grease to accumulate, which allowed enough heat to build up to start the fire. During the fire, smoke and soot spread into the backup electrical system and knocked that out as well. The NRC said in December

2011 that Omaha Public Power District officials were too slow to notify state emergency response officials about the fire. A serious threat finding typically could mean additional oversight for a nuclear plant, but Fort Calhoun already is under the NRC's strictest oversight level because of a prolonged shutdown that began last spring and several other reported problems.

Source:

[http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2017730658\\_apusnuclearsafetynebraska.html](http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2017730658_apusnuclearsafetynebraska.html)

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## **Critical Manufacturing Sector**

9. *March 13, Associated Press* – (Ohio) **Ohio magnesium fire closes schools.** A fire at a magnesium plant in Bellevue, Ohio, prompted schools to close and police to ask nearby residents to stay indoors March 13. The Morning Journal in Lorain reported trailers holding magnesium caught fire at the MagReTech Inc. facility. The company refines and recycles magnesium, and supplies magnesium alloys for die-casting.

Source: <http://www.ohio.com/news/break-news/ohio-magnesium-fire-closes-schools-1.272935>

10. *March 12, U.S. Department of Labor* – (Florida) **U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA cites 2 Davie, Fla., companies for safety violations; proposes more than \$59,000 in penalties.** The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) March 12 cited two Davie, Florida companies with the same owners, Merlin Industries Inc. and Thermal Concepts Inc., with 17 safety violations. The OSHA began an inspection in September 2011 at Merlin as part of the agency's National Emphasis Program on Amputations and then expanded the inspection to include Thermal Concepts once it was determined both companies share the same building. Merlin was cited for 11 serious violations relating to energy control and machinery guarding, while Thermal was cited for 2 serious violations for failing to guard open-sided floor areas as well as to store oxygen and acetylene cylinders away from combustible materials.

Source:

[http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=NEWS\\_RELEASES&p\\_id=21954](http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=NEWS_RELEASES&p_id=21954)

11. *March 12, U.S. Department of Labor* – (Alabama) **U.S. Department of Labor's OSHA cites Stella-Jones Corp. for 16 violations following fatality at Alabama railroad tie manufacturing plant.** The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration March 12 cited Stella-Jones Corp., a manufacturer of railroad ties, with 16 safety violations, including one willful, following the crushing death of a worker who was caught in a machine at the company's facility in Warrior, Alabama. The willful violation was for failing to install guards to prevent access to the rotating and moving parts of a pre-plate boring machine used to drill holes into railroad ties. Twelve serious violations were also cited.

Source:

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## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

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## **Banking and Finance Sector**

12. *March 13, Grand Rapids Press* – (Michigan) **Grand Rapids man, Sparta man accused in \$9 million Ponzi scheme targeting elderly.** Two west Michigan men have been accused of running a \$9 million Ponzi scheme that targeted the elderly. The pair were expected in district court March 13. The state attorney general (AG) said they promised huge returns but actually sold fake securities through API Worldwide Holdings. The investigation, by the office of financial and insurance regulation and the AG's office, showed there were at least 140 victims whose losses ranged from \$3,000 to \$600,000. The state AG alleged the two "preyed on elderly victims," and convinced them to cash in certificates of deposit (CD) and other investments to invest in API Worldwide. He said the two allegedly tracked maturation dates of CDs, then contacted the owners to persuade them to invest in API once CDs matured. The pair are charged with conducting a criminal enterprise (racketeering), six counts of false pretenses over \$20,000, and 25 counts of security fraud. API Worldwide Holdings is also facing the same charges.

Source: [http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/03/grand\\_rapids\\_man\\_sparta\\_man\\_ac.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/03/grand_rapids_man_sparta_man_ac.html)

13. *March 13, Reuters* – (National) **JPMorgan paying \$45 million to settle mortgage suit.** JPMorgan Chase & Co. is paying the federal government \$45 million to settle a lawsuit alleging it charged veterans hidden fees in mortgage refinancing, according to court documents filed March 12. The whistleblower lawsuit, filed in 2006 in Georgia, seeks payments on behalf of the U.S. government by eight banks and mortgage companies, a law firm involved in the case said March 13. JPMorgan is the first bank to reach a settlement. According to court documents, the payment was part of the national mortgage settlement over foreclosure abuses reached with JPMorgan and four other lenders in February. The case is still pending against the other lenders, including Bank of America Corp, Wells Fargo & Co, and Citigroup Inc.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/13/us-jpmorgan-settlement-idUSBRE82C0R220120313>

14. *March 13, IDG News* – (International) **Cybercriminals bypass e-banking protections with fraudulent SIM cards, says Trusteer.** Cybercriminals are impersonating victims to obtain replacement SIM cards from mobile carriers, which they then use to defeat phone-based Internet banking protections, security vendor Trusteer said in a March 13

blog post. Trusteer researchers have recently seen variants of the Gozi online banking trojan injecting rogue Web forms into online banking sessions to trick victims into exposing their phone's international mobile equipment identity number, in addition to other personal and security data. The likely explanation for the collection of phone-specific data is it is used to obtain a fraudulent SIM card for the phone number by reporting the phone as stolen, Trusteer's director of product marketing said. This would allow fraudsters to bypass bank anti-fraud defenses based on one-time passwords (OTPs). OTPs are unique codes online banking customers receive on their phones when money transfers are initiated from their accounts. These codes need to be inputted into the bank's Web site to authorize those transactions. Fraudsters have developed several techniques to defeat such anti-fraud systems. Impersonating victims to obtain fraudulent SIM cards is a new method that serves the same purpose.

Source:

[http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/251741/cybercriminals\\_bypass\\_ebanking\\_protections\\_with\\_fraudulent\\_sim\\_cards\\_says\\_trusteer.html](http://www.pcworld.com/businesscenter/article/251741/cybercriminals_bypass_ebanking_protections_with_fraudulent_sim_cards_says_trusteer.html)

15. *March 12, CNET News* – (International) **FBI says \$700K charged in Anonymous' Stratfor attack.** Days after the Antisec branch of Anonymous hacked into security think tank Strategic Forecasting (Stratfor) at the end of December 2011, the group published 860,000 e-mail addresses and 75,000 unencrypted credit card numbers on the Web, CNET News reported March 12. Now, the FBI stated between December 6, 2011, and February, "at least \$700,000 worth of unauthorized charges were made to credit card accounts that were among those stolen during the Stratfor Hack," according to a March 9 report from Internet security news site Security Week. Stratfor's list of clients whose information was allegedly compromised in the hack includes the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, Department of Defense, Lockheed Martin, and Bank of America. The information was made available the week of March 12 during a court case for one of the alleged hackers arrested the week of March 5 by the FBI for the Stratfor attack. According to Security Week, the hacker was charged with one count of computer hacking conspiracy, one count of computer hacking, and one count of conspiracy to commit access device fraud.

Source: [http://news.cnet.com/8301-1009\\_3-57395944-83/fbi-says-\\$700k-charged-in-anonymous-stratfor-attack/?tag=mncol;txt](http://news.cnet.com/8301-1009_3-57395944-83/fbi-says-$700k-charged-in-anonymous-stratfor-attack/?tag=mncol;txt)

16. *March 12, San Diego Union-Tribune* – (California) **Suspected 'Insistent Bandit' arrested.** Authorities arrested a man suspected of being the so-called "Insistent Bandit," who is believed to have struck at least six banks in San Diego, the FBI said March 12. The suspect was arrested March 8, along with a suspected accomplice, federal authorities said. The pair were arrested in El Cajon, California, without incident. They were charged with robbing a Pacific Western Bank February 21 and getting away with \$1,432 in cash. The bandit allegedly entered the bank, showed a gun tucked into his waistband, and told a teller he was armed and wanted cash. The teller recognized him from photos from previous robberies. The bandit is suspected of five other robberies starting January 17. The "Insistent Bandit" got his name because of the persistent manner in which he asked for money.

Source: <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/mar/12/suspected-insistent-bandit-arrested/>

17. *March 12, New York Daily News* – (New York) **FBI on the hunt for bank robber sleuths call the ‘White Glove Bandit’.** The feds are on the hunt for a gun-toting robber who has worn white latex gloves while holding up three Manhattan, New York banks since January. Dubbed the “White Glove Bandit” by investigators, the crook has hit the same Citibank branch on two occasions — most recently March 12, the FBI said. The suspect approached a teller’s window and waved a black revolver as he demanded cash. He then fled the branch on foot. The robber hit the same bank February 14, the FBI said. His first-known heist was January 26 at an HSBC Bank branch, some 9 blocks away from the Citibank branch. The bandit made off with a “significant” amount of cash in each robbery, with his total take running into the tens of thousands of dollars, an FBI source said.  
Source: <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/fbi-hunt-bank-robber-sleuths-call-white-glove-bandit-article-1.1037764?localLinksEnabled=false>

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## **Transportation Sector**

18. *March 13, CNN* – (Georgia) **Delta plane runs off taxiway.** A Delta Airlines jet veered off a taxiway March 13 at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. The airline’s spokesman said mechanics were testing the engines of a Boeing 737-700 and experienced a problem with the braking system. There were no passengers on board. The plane did have significant damage, however. The Federal Aviation Administration said the accident did not impact planes landing or taking off from the airport.  
Source: <http://wtvr.com/2012/03/13/delta-plane-runs-off-taxiway/>
19. *March 13, CNN* – (Louisiana) **Rains soak, flood southern Louisiana.** Record floodwater inundated parts of southern Louisiana March 13 after intense rains caused flash flooding that deluged homes, closed dozens of roads, and prompted hundreds of rescues. Estimates by the National Weather Service put total rainfall at 12 to 18 inches across the region, with possible amounts of 20 or more inches in some areas. Floodwaters were cresting overnight for Bayou Vermilion at Carencro at 5.5 feet over flood stage and 12 inches above the record set in May 2004. A Lafayette Parish Sheriff’s Office spokesman said, “We’ve done over 150 rescues throughout the day today.” One of those involved 16 middle school students whose bus became stuck after more than 4 feet of water covered the road. Boats and dump trucks were used to reach the children and bring them to safety. The town of Carencro was among the hardest hit communities in Lafayette Parish, according to a captain from the parish sheriff’s office. He noted there were reports of water as high as 8 feet on some roadways.  
Source: [http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/13/us/louisiana-flooding/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t2](http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/13/us/louisiana-flooding/index.html?hpt=hp_t2)
20. *March 9, KHOU 11 Houston* – (Texas) **FAA: Four airplanes struck by lightning, land safely.** Four planes that were struck by lightning in the Houston area March 9 were able to land without incident, said a representative from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). A United Airlines spokesperson said Flight 107, which was en route to Bogota, Colombia, turned around and landed safely. The Boeing 737 was 15 miles east of George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH) when it was struck, according

to the FAA. Officials with ExpressJet said its flight 4637 was returning to IAH for an unrelated mechanical issue when it was hit by lightning. The aircraft was an Embraer 147, and the strike happened 35 miles northeast of IAH. ExpressJet said it was operating as United Express from Houston to Mobile, Alabama. The plane landed safely with 47 passengers on board. Delta Airlines flight 1832 from Atlanta to William P. Hobby Airport in Houston was also struck and landed safely without incident. The FAA also said AirTran Flight 297, a Boeing 717, which was on its way to Hobby Airport from Atlanta, was also struck by lightning and landed safely without incident. Source: <http://www.khou.com/news/FAA-Four-airplanes-struck-by-lightning-land-safely-142155093.html>

For more stories, see items [2](#) and [5](#)

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## **Postal and Shipping Sector**

Nothing to report

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## **Agriculture and Food Sector**

21. *March 13, Food Safety News* – (Southeast) **Allergen alert: Stew seasoning packaging error.** McCormick & Company notified Publix Super Markets it is recalling a single lot code of Publix Beef Stew Seasoning Mix because it may have been packaged in error with brown gravy and may contain undeclared milk, Food Safety News reported March 13. The mislabeled beef stew mix was distributed in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina.  
Source: <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2012/03/allergen-alert-beef-stew-seasoning-with-milk/>
22. *March 13, Food Safety News* – (International) **Allergen alert: Sulfites in macaroon cookie mix.** Farmer John’s Herbs is recalling its “Mud Pie” Macaroon Cookie Mix sold in several provinces in Canada due to undeclared sulfite allergens, Food Safety News reported March 13. The recalled cookie mix was sold in 400-gram packages labeled “Mud Pie” Macaroon Cookie Mix in stores in Alberta, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Ontario. All lot codes are affected.  
Source: <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2012/03/allergen-alert-sulfites-in-macaroon-cookie-mix/>
23. *March 12, Associated Press* – (New Jersey; Pennsylvania) **Tainted milk was used to make cheese in New Jersey.** A New Jersey cheesemaker made its ricotta cheese from tainted milk that was on its way to a landfill, federal authorities charged, the Associated Press reported March 12. The raw milk from Pennsylvania was condemned because of high levels of antibiotics, authorities said. Lebanon Cheese Co. of Lebanon, New Jersey, and its president were charged March 12 with a misdemeanor interstate

shipping charge. The company paid cash for the discounted milk from D.A. Landis Trucking Inc. of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, although dairy farmers pledged to dispose of it, prosecutors said. Lebanon sold the ricotta cheese to restaurants, delis, ravioli manufacturers, and others. Landis and its president agreed to plead guilty March 16 in Allentown to conspiracy to falsify driver log books. Landis trucked milk from about 700 dairy farms in Pennsylvania to large dairy processors in 2008 and 2009. About 20 loads were condemned after tests showed they had more than the acceptable level of hormones. The milk was supposed to be taken to landfills, but the Landis president allegedly told his drivers to move it to other trucks.

Source:

<http://nhregister.com/articles/2012/03/12/news/doc4f5ea3196565c300146313.txt>

24. *March 12, Tampa Bay Online* – (Florida) **Gas leak forces evacuation of Tampa Palms restaurant.** A worker accidentally broke a gas line March 12 that led to the evacuation of an Olive Garden in Tampa, Florida. Tampa Fire Rescue responded and found a heavy-equipment operator hit a natural-gas line while digging. The restaurant was evacuated while the HAZMAT team and Tampa Electric crews sealed the leak. The leak was secured after 2 hours, and the restaurant was reopened.  
Source: <http://www2.tbo.com/news/breaking-news/2012/mar/12/gas-leak-forces-evacuation-of-tampa-palms-restaura-ar-368428/>
25. *March 11, New York Times* – (New York) **Wily, elusive foragers invade upstate New York.** Feral pigs have been ransacking farms in upstate New York eating apples and other crops, the New York Times reported March 11. They roam by night, picking cornstalks clean, making off with apple crops. They have almost no natural predators, but they have razor-sharp tusks and a voracious appetite for plants and animals. Their population can triple in a year. Feral pigs have long plagued parts of the southern and western United States, now they have become a problem in the Champlain Valley of New York, an agricultural heartland on the edge of the Adirondacks. They hunt at night and steer clear of humans. The pigs devour ground-nesting birds and reptiles, fawns and domestic livestock, native vegetation, and crops. Wildlife managers and researchers nationally are exploring control measures, from contraceptives and poisons to snares and aerial shooting. Some are even employing night-vision equipment and thermal imaging. In New York, the state’s ordinarily strict hunting rules have been relaxed for feral swine. The department of environmental conservation’s Web site advises those with small game licenses to “shoot and keep feral swine at any time and in any number.”  
Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/12/nyregion/feral-pigs-plaguing-upstate-new-york.html?smid=tw-nytmetro&seid=auto>

For more stories, see items [7](#), [26](#), and [35](#)

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## Water Sector

26. *March 13, Associated Press* – (California) **Report: Calif. nitrate contamination spreading.** A study, ordered by the California legislature, shows chemical fertilizers and livestock manure are the main source of nitrate contamination in groundwater for more than 1 million Californians in the Salinas Valley and parts of the Central Valley. According to the University of California, Davis study released March 13, nitrate contamination of drinking water is a pervasive problem in California's agricultural heartland and is bound to intensify in coming years. The study concluded half of the 2.6 million people in those areas live in communities where raw drinking water sources have registered nitrate levels exceeding the standard. Many of those communities blend or treat their water, drill a new well, or provide another alternative source, passing on extra costs to rate payers. The study offers an assessment of how many people are exposed and identifies solutions and costs. The study also found that about 1 in 10 people in the area rely on untreated groundwater that may exceed nitrate standards. If nothing is done, the study concludes, the financial burden on many agricultural communities could increase. By 2050, nearly 80 percent of the population — about 2 million residents — in the study area could have nitrate contamination exceeding the state standard. The study claims cleaning up polluted aquifers would be too difficult, and says improved farming practices and water blending, treatment, and alternative water sources are more cost effective. Addressing current nitrate contamination will potentially cost the state \$20 million to \$35 million per year. The study proposes a fertilizer tax that would be used by affected communities to mitigate for nitrate contamination. Another funding option is water use fees from affected residents. The study found nitrate leaching from agricultural land is responsible for 96 percent of current groundwater contamination. And while fertilizer use has leveled off in recent years, the amount of dairy manure has increased, making for a net increase over the past decade in nitrates loaded into the ground.

Source:

[http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2012/03/13/report\\_calif\\_nitrate\\_contamination\\_spreading/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2012/03/13/report_calif_nitrate_contamination_spreading/)

27. *March 13, WFTV 9 Orlando* – (Florida) **Broken water treatment facility leaks sewage into lake.** Partially treated sewage continues to flow into a Brevard County neighborhood near Cocoa Beach, Florida, and could eventually reach the environmentally sensitive Banana River, WFTV 9 Orlando reported March 13. City officials said the cause was a mechanical failure at a Cocoa Beach wastewater treatment facility. Engineers worked March 12 to fix a water clarifier that broke March 9. City officials said there is no health issue associated with the leak because the reclaimed water is for watering yards and not drinking water. The issue means residents are not getting reclaimed water they paid for and the facility will have to be drained before engineers can fix the problem. The city has two plants capable of pumping more than 6 million gallons of reclaimed water on a regular day. But, one of the plants was taken off-line for renovations and the second cannot operate properly because of the broken equipment. City leaders expect to have the equipment fixed by March 16. The city could face thousands of dollars in fines for the pollution.

Source: <http://www.wftv.com/news/news/local/broken-water-treatment-facility-leaks-sewage-lake/nLRQm/>

28. *March 13, Duluth News Tribune* – (Minnesota) **Electrical problem causes water-main breaks in Lakeside and Lincoln Park.** An electrical problem at the Lakewood water plant the weekend of March 10 led to breaks in the Lakeside and Lincoln Park neighborhoods of Duluth, Minnesota. A pressure surge through some water mains resulted in multiple breaks, with old pipes and frost movement underground adding to the problem. Service was restored by late March 12, according to the city, although crews discovered two new breaks during the afternoon in upper Lakeside. Repairs on those breaks continued.

Source: <http://www.duluthnewstribune.com/event/article/id/225494/group/News/>

29. *March 12, Bainbridge Post-Searchlight* – (Georgia) **County reports another wastewater spill.** According to a Decatur County, Georgia attorney, another major spill occurred at the Decatur County Air Industrial Park wastewater plant March 4. The incident was reported to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) March 9. In a report, the attorney said the spill was the result of heavy rainfall the weekend of March 3 which caused a PVC filter to become dislodged, allowing an “undetermined amount of solids” to pass through the equalization basin, and into the Flint River. About 600,000 gallons of “infiltrated water and wastewater” was discharged into the river before the spill was stopped. The county is currently under a consent order from the EPD relating to the release of improper waste material into the river. In addition, there was a spill that reportedly occurred in February 2011 and which was not reported to the EPD in a timely fashion. Although the size of the spill is not known, several commissioners publicly stated it was more than 160,000 gallons. February 28, the former county administrator resigned amid allegations that he failed to report the spill.

Source: <http://www.thepostsearchlight.com/2012/03/12/county-reports-another-wastewater-spill/>

For more stories, see items [2](#) and [35](#)

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## **Public Health and Healthcare Sector**

30. *March 12, Canton Repository* – (Ohio) **Fire forces evacuation of Minerva nursing facility.** More than 30 residents of Minerva Eldercare in Minerva, Ohio, were evacuated March 11 because of a fire at the skilled nursing facility. The chief of the Sandy Creek Fire District said a small electrical fire happened after a 2-inch water line broke in the second-story mechanical room, causing the water to flow down into the electrical room on the lower level. The residents were taken to the Minerva Eagles while firefighters worked the scene, assisted by the Osnaburg Township Fire Department. Residents were later transported by ambulance to two other nursing facilities. Minerva Eldercare remained closed March 12 while repairs were being made. In addition to electrical damage, water also damaged the second floor and a first-floor hallway. Damages are estimated at \$25,000. The facility was expected to reopen later

the week of March 12.

Source: <http://www.cantonrep.com/newsnow/x299874441/Fire-forces-evacuation-of-Minerva-nursing-facility>

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## **Government Facilities Sector**

31. *March 12, Associated Press* – (National) **Court hearing for man charged in threat letters.** A Vancouver, Washington man charged in connection with threatening letters containing white powder that were sent to members of Congress and some media organizations agreed to be moved from a Washington state detention center to a Portland, Oregon jail, the Associated Press reported March 12. Once in Portland, he is expected to be arraigned on two criminal counts arising out of an investigation into the mailing of about 100 envelopes containing white powder. He was arrested March 9 in Washington state. The U.S. attorney's office said the letters, postmarked in Portland, so far have tested negative for toxic substances.

Source:

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2017734404\\_aporcongressthreats.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2017734404_aporcongressthreats.html)

32. *March 12, Help Net Security* – (National) **Higher education breaches significantly down.** In a year highlighted by the biggest data security breaches on record, colleges appear to have had a reprieve relative to prior years in terms of overall breaches reported and the corresponding number of total records breached, Help Net Security reported March 12. In 2011, there was a decrease in the total number of reported records affected (478,490), as well as institutions (48), that reported breaches. Both figures are all-time lows since data breach recording began in 2005, according to Application Security's TeamSHATTER. The largest reported data breach in 2011 by a U.S.-based institution of higher learning came from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), which reported a breach of 176,567 records in November. Other top victims included the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee (79,000), Yale University (43,000), and the University of South Carolina (31,000). VCU became the 21st higher education institution since 2005 to report a data breach in excess of 100,000 records and was the only one to eclipse that number in 2011. Three institutions exceeded the 100,000 mark in 2010. In 2005 – the first year reported data breaches were recorded – 6 higher education schools surpassed 100,000. According to the Ponemon Institute's most recent "Annual Study: U.S. Cost of a Data Breach" (March 2011), the findings showed the average cost to organizations per compromised record was \$214, though in the education vertical the average cost was far lower at \$112 per record. However, based on the lower education average, the VCU data breach could cost the university nearly \$20 million.

Source: <http://www.net-security.org/secworld.php?id=12579>

For more stories, see items [9](#), [15](#), and [19](#)

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## Emergency Services Sector

33. *March 12, Associated Press* – (California) **Calif. prison officials review policies on gang members, high-risk inmates.** California prison officials March 9 unveiled proposed changes to rules that kept some gang members locked in isolation for years and led to widespread inmate hunger strikes in 2011. They also released a study that could help save taxpayers money by giving the state more flexibility to house some high-risk inmates in lower-level prisons instead of building new maximum-security lockups. Both moves are possible, officials said, because the state is diverting thousands of lower-level criminals from state prisons to local jails under a law that took effect in October 2011. The state can safely house some maximum-security inmates in lower-level prisons, according to five University of California criminology experts commissioned to review the department's classification system. That could free up space in maximum-security prisons to house some of the 2,300 or so gang members currently in security housing units, the state department of corrections and rehabilitation's undersecretary for operations said. The proposed rules said gang members would no longer have to renounce gang membership. Instead, they could win more privileges and get out of isolation units in 4 years instead of 6 if they stop engaging in gang activities and participate in anger management and drug rehabilitation programs. Under the proposed policy, many gang associates could continue living in the general population. That shift alone could significantly reduce the population in security units, the undersecretary for operations said.  
Source: <http://www.officer.com/news/10654451/calif-prison-officials-review-policies-on-gang-members-high-risk-inmates>
34. *March 11, Associated Press* – (Ohio) **Ohio village police shut down after stun gun used.** Officials said the small police force in a central Ohio village was shut down after an officer used a stun gun on a boy and the police chief did not tell village leaders about it, the Associated Press reported March 11. Authorities had not released many details about the March 6 incident in Mount Sterling. Police were called to an apartment about a boy who would not go to school, and the situation somehow escalated before the stun gun was used, a Madison County prosecutor said. The council president said the chief was suspended for not reporting what happened, and part-time officers are no longer working. Another sheriff said his office was temporarily handling patrolling the village. His office also has secured the police department's weapons and computers for now.  
Source:  
<http://www.coshoctontribune.com/article/20120311/NEWS01/203110311/Ohio-village-police-shut-down-after-stun-gun-used?odyssey=mod|mostview>
35. *March 8, MyHealthNewsDaily* – (Michigan; Indiana) **Firefighters' parasites came from barn fire, report finds.** Twenty firefighters in the Midwest became infected with a gastrointestinal parasite after responding to a fire in a barn where 240 week-old calves were kept, according to a March 8 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Investigators at the CDC determined the firefighters were infected with an organism called *Cryptosporidium parvum*, a single-celled protozoan parasite, after fighting the June 2011 fire near the border of Michigan and Indiana. The

men reported symptoms such as diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and fatigue, and it is likely that others who had no symptoms were also infected, the report said. For most, the illness subsided in a few days, but one man was hospitalized and had to have his gall bladder removed. Direct contact with calves in the barn likely led to most of the infections. The firefighters had touched the animals, carrying or leading them out of the barn. Among the 20 sick men, only 2 did not report direct calf contact. Water from a swimming pond near the barn was used to extinguish the fire; it was likely contaminated with fecal matter from the animals. The firefighters may have been infected when they washed themselves with water from the pond.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/03/08/firefighters-parasites-came-from-barn-fire-report-finds/?intcmp=obnetwork>

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## **Information Technology Sector**

36. *March 13, H Security* – (International) **Firefox 11 release postponed due to security issues.** The Firefox team announced they are postponing the release of Firefox 11, originally planned for March 13, because of a security report that the team wants to evaluate to make sure the issue will not impact on their code. Mozilla's senior director of Firefox engineering, cited Microsoft's monthly Patch Tuesday security update, also scheduled for March 13, as a reason to hold back on releasing the new Firefox version. Source: <http://www.h-online.com/security/news/item/Firefox-11-release-postponed-due-to-security-issues-1470624.html>
37. *March 13, H Security* – (International) **Safari update closes security holes.** Apple released version 5.1.4 of its Safari Web browser for Windows and Mac OS X. According to the company, the maintenance and security update addresses more than 80 vulnerabilities. A majority of the security holes closed in 5.1.4 were found in the WebKit browser engine used by Safari. These include several cross-site scripting, cross-origin and HTTP authentication problems, as well as numerous memory corruption bugs that could be exploited by an attacker, for example, to cause unexpected application termination or arbitrary code execution. Source: <http://www.h-online.com/security/news/item/Safari-update-closes-security-holes-1470595.html>
38. *March 13, Infosecurity* – (International) **Framesniffing with Chrome, Safari and Internet Explorer.** Security consultancy Context produced an analysis of framesniffing, an attack technique that can data mine sensitive data through Web browsers and iFrames. Framesniffing is not a typical cyberattack. It does not seek to deposit a trojan or rootkit on the target computer. Instead, it harvests private data that can subsequently be amalgamated and used for different purposes: for example, to build a detailed personality profile for a potential spear-phishing target, or to determine the likelihood of a potential merger or acquisition. The Context analysis explains the process and demonstrates it in action against both SharePoint and LinkedIn. Chrome, Safari, and Internet Explorer can all be used, although Firefox was patched in 2011 to prevent framesniffing. The technique bypasses Web browsers' iFrame security

defenses by using HTML anchors to determine the presence or absence of specific data on, for example, a target Sharepoint server. All the attacker needs is the Sharepoint URL. “Using Framesniffing, it’s possible for a malicious webpage to run search queries for potentially sensitive terms on a SharePoint server and determine how many results are found for each query,” explained a senior security consultant at Context. “For example, with a given company name it is possible to establish who their customers or partners are; and once this information has been found, the attacker can go on to perform increasingly complex searches and uncover valuable commercial information.” Source: <http://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/view/24490/>

39. *March 13, H Security* – (International) **Critical vulnerabilities in XnView fixed.** Version 1.98.8 of the popular XnView image viewer and converter was released to close security holes in the software. According to an advisory from security service provider Secunia, the update addresses three “highly critical” vulnerabilities that could be exploited by an attacker to execute arbitrary code and compromise a victim’s system. These include a stack-based buffer overflow caused by a boundary error when parsing a directory name while browsing folders such as those from an extracted archive file, and, a heap-based buffer overflow when processing image content using the FlashPix plugin (Xfpx.dll). A second heap-based buffer overflow caused when processing image data in Personal Computer eXchange (PCX) files was also fixed. For an attack to be successful, a user must first open a specially crafted file. The problems are confirmed to affect XnView 1.98.5, however, other versions may also be vulnerable.  
Source: <http://www.h-online.com/security/news/item/Critical-vulnerabilities-in-XnView-fixed-1470825.html>
40. *March 12, IDG News Service* – (International) **Google’s trap for Chrome exploit writers leads to crashes for users.** A limitation built recently into Google Chrome to detect and block Flash Player exploits ended up breaking certain Flash-based applications and games for some users. Suspecting someone would try to hack Chrome via a Flash exploit at 2012’s Pwn2Own contest, the browser’s developers decided to restrict the maximum allowed size of Flash JIT (just-in-time) pages to a value that such exploits would likely exceed. The restriction was written in such a way that when the new limit would be reached the browser would throw an “access violation” exception that referenced memory address “0xABADIDEA,” a hexadecimal value spelling out “a bad idea.” According to Chrome’s development tracker, the limit was introduced February 23 and was first tested out in the browser’s Canary (nightly build) version. The limit was later tweaked because of a considerable number of crash reports and landed in Chrome stable version 17.0.963.66 March 6.  
Source:  
[http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9225107/Google\\_39\\_s\\_trap\\_for\\_Chrome\\_exploit\\_writers\\_leads\\_to\\_crashes\\_for\\_users?taxonomyId=17](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9225107/Google_39_s_trap_for_Chrome_exploit_writers_leads_to_crashes_for_users?taxonomyId=17)
41. *March 12, eWeek* – (International) **Twitter being used by malware developers: Symantec.** Symantec security researchers are seeing cyber criminals increasingly using Twitter as a way of luring mobile device users to their malware. In a March 12 post on Symantec’s blog, a company employee said tweets are becoming a popular way for

cyber criminals to bring people to the Android.Opfake malware. “Users can potentially end up infecting their mobile devices with Android.Opfake by searching for tweets on subjects such as software, mobile devices, pornography or even dieting topics, to name a few,” he wrote. “Android.Opfake is not hosted on the Android Market (Play Store) and these tweets lead to malicious Websites developed for the Opfake application.” These tweets, he said, usually have short URLs, and are primarily written in Russian, with some English mixed in. In addition, once the users get to the site, they are prompted to install the malicious code. However, while those are common aspects of most cyber criminals using Twitter, their individual tactics vary, making it difficult to determine which tweets are bad, short of actually clicking on the link.

Source: <http://www.eweek.com/c/a/Security/Twitter-Being-Used-by-Malware-Developers-Symantec-770305/>

For more stories, see items [14](#), [15](#), [32](#), and [43](#)

### Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at [sos@us-cert.gov](mailto:sos@us-cert.gov) or visit their Web site: <http://www.us-cert.gov>

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

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## Communications Sector

42. *March 13, Arlington Heights Daily Herald* – (Illinois) **Cable, Internet and phone restored to 17,000 WOW! customers.** Service was restored to about 17,000 WOW! cable customers in the northwest suburbs of Chicago who were without service for most of March 12 after a fiber-optic line was severed. Officials announced on their Facebook Web site March 13, that service was restored to customers in Des Plaines, Park Ridge, Arlington Heights, Mount Prospect, Prospect Heights, and Glenview. Officials said March 12 a major fiber-optic line was cut, causing a “catastrophic outage.”  
Source: <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20120313/news/703129692/>
43. *March 13, Salisbury Post* – (North Carolina) **Fibrant down due to cut cable, backup provider sought.** Fibrant went down for several hours March 12 after a fiber-optic line was cut between Concord and Salisbury, North Carolina, leaving customers without Internet or phone service. Damage occurred to DukeNet’s line. DukeNet provides Fibrant’s primary transport for Internet and phone services. Service was back up about 4 hours later, after DukeNet worked to manually reroute Fibrant around the cut line. The incident emphasized Fibrant’s need for a second Internet service provider, Salisbury’s city manager said. Called “redundancy,” a second provider would offer back-up service if the primary service fails.  
Source: <http://www.salisburypost.com/News/031312-Fibrant-outage-shows-needs-for-redundancy-qcd>

44. *March 12, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* – (Wisconsin) **Cut fiber optic cable limits AT&T long-distance calls.** An unknown number of Milwaukee-area AT&T wireless customers were unable to make some of their calls March 12 after a contractor accidentally cut a fiber optic cable in northern Illinois. The accident happened outside Elk Grove Village, an AT&T spokesman said. He said he did not know when the problem would be fixed. It appeared to be affecting calls placed to locations outside Wisconsin. A contractor for another utility severed the cable while boring into the ground, the AT&T spokesman said.  
Source: <http://www.jsonline.com/business/cut-fiber-optic-cable-limits-att-longdistance-calls-kv4hu55-142389005.html>

For more stories, see items [14](#) and [41](#)

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## **Commercial Facilities Sector**

45. *March 13, WEWS 5 Cleveland* – (Ohio) **Brimfield police: Busted meth lab run by undocumented worker.** Brimfield, Ohio police busted a meth lab in a local hotel room at the Econo Lodge March 12. The hotel had to be evacuated due to the raid. Police said a suspect from Alabama working with a crew of undocumented workers from Mexico and Central America operated the lab. The police chief said Border Patrol was assisting in handling 23 undocumented workers. Police said the suspect was charged with manufacturing meth, assembly of the chemicals, and tampering with evidence, and that he had prior convictions in two other states, one for firearm offenses.  
Source: [http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local\\_news/oh\\_portage/a-local-motel-is-evacuated-after-police-found-a-meth-lab-inside-a-room](http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local_news/oh_portage/a-local-motel-is-evacuated-after-police-found-a-meth-lab-inside-a-room)
46. *March 12, U-T San Diego* – (California) **Truck catches fire at Escondido mall.** A fire in Escondido, California, March 12 destroyed the cab of a tractor-trailer, caused a small fuel spill, and blocked an entrance to a busy shopping center for several hours. Escondido firefighters responded to a call at the north driveway of the Escondido Promenade center. The driver said he was exiting southbound Interstate 15 when he noticed an unusual smell and saw smoke coming from the truck's engine. He was able to exit the vehicle shortly before flames enveloped the cab.  
Source: <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/mar/12/truck-catches-fire-escondido-mall/>

For more stories, see items [19](#), [31](#), and [38](#)

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## **National Monuments and Icons Sector**

47. *March 11, Billings Gazette* – (Montana) **11 firefighters on scene at Bear Trap blaze near Ennis.** An abandoned campfire is to blame for a wind-driven wildfire that scorched at least 100 acres of land along the Bear Trap National Recreation Trail, north

of Ennis, Montana, the weekend of March 10. As of March 11, 11 firefighters with the Forest Service remained on the scene putting out hot spots, a Forest Service spokeswoman said. Authorities evacuated an estimated 100 people who were recreating there when the fire broke out, she said. Access to the Bear Trap National Recreation Trail, which winds through the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, was closed until further notice. The spokeswoman said crews were expected to be working at the fire for a couple of days. Firefighters from the Bureau of Land Management, Madison County, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, and the Ennis Volunteer Fire Department assisted the Forest Service in the management of the fire.

Source: [http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/firefighters-on-scene-at-bear-trap-blaze-near-ennis/article\\_3395c53d-7b6c-5ad4-8e0a-93413eeac311.html](http://billingsgazette.com/news/state-and-regional/montana/firefighters-on-scene-at-bear-trap-blaze-near-ennis/article_3395c53d-7b6c-5ad4-8e0a-93413eeac311.html)

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## **Dams Sector**

48. *March 12, Butte County Post* – (Wyoming; South Dakota) **Keyhole Reservoir high; Belle Fourche near full.** Dry weather conditions sparking fires and a Butte County, South Dakota burn ban have not cut rising water in Bureau of Reclamation reservoirs, including Keyhole in northeast Wyoming and the Belle Fourche Reservoir at Orman Dam in Butte County. A Reclamation news release March 12 reported warm weather caused Keyhole Reservoir to rise over a foot in elevation in the last 5 days bringing it to an elevation that is only 0.7 feet from full, or 4098.6 feet. The reservoir outflows eventually enter the Belle Fourche River watershed. The chief of facility operation and maintenance and engineering services for Reclamation’s Dakotas Area Office said, “Inflows since Oct. 1, 2011 (water year 2012) were 143 percent of average.” When the reservoir becomes full, a small amount of water will flow out of the uncontrolled spillway of the dam and a small controlled release from the outlet works will begin at 50 cubic feet per second. The Belle Fourche Reservoir is currently at elevation 2970.15; full reservoir elevation is 2975.0. At the end of February, the diversion dam river outlet gates began diverting Belle Fourche River flows to Inlet Canal which flows into the Belle Fourche Reservoir. Additional inflows from Owl Creek, which flows directly into the reservoir, also contribute to the reservoir during snow melt and precipitation events.

Source: [http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/communities/belle\\_fourche/keyhole-reservoir-high-belle-fourche-near-full/article\\_42846d24-6c94-11e1-8d04-0019bb2963f4.html](http://rapidcityjournal.com/news/local/communities/belle_fourche/keyhole-reservoir-high-belle-fourche-near-full/article_42846d24-6c94-11e1-8d04-0019bb2963f4.html)

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To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at [soc@us-cert.gov](mailto:soc@us-cert.gov) or visit their Web page at [www.us-cert.gov](http://www.us-cert.gov).

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