



Department of Homeland Security Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 10 December 2003

Current Nationwide Threat Level is

ELEVATED
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF TERRORIST ATTACKS

[For info click here](#)

www.whitehouse.gov/homeland

Daily Overview

- The Edmonton Journal reports the weekend seizure of two pipe bombs at Edmonton International Airport marks the first time such a device has been detected in Canada since new security restrictions came into effect after September 11, 2001. (See item [7](#))
- CNN reports Italian supermarkets are on high alert in an attempt to thwart a mystery assailant who has been injecting bleach and acetone into plastic bottles of water. (See item [15](#))
- CNET reports Yahoo has issued an update to its instant-messaging software, in order to address a security flaw found in the application. (See item [27](#))

DHS/IAIP Update *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation](#); [Postal and Shipping](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: Elevated, Cyber: Elevated

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

1. *December 09, Dow Jones Business News* — Michigan orders post-blackout tree trimming reports. The Michigan Public Service Commission on Tuesday, December 9, ordered local investor-owned utilities to file reports by April 1 detailing their tree trimming practices, citing tree-related problems that preceded the huge August 14 blackout. The blackout started in the northern Ohio-based territory of an energy company and harshly affected Michigan, knocking out power to the city of Detroit and surrounding areas served by a Michigan utility company. "Today's order comes as a direct result of reports on the August 14

blackout that concluded that sagging power lines that came into contact with trees were an important factor in triggering the cascading blackout," J. Peter Lark, chairman of the Michigan commission, said in a statement. **The Michigan commission wants reports to detail utilities' 2003 efforts to clear vegetation away from power lines, tree trimming frequency, efforts to focus on problem areas, future trimming plans and finances devoted to vegetation maintenance.**

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/djus/031209/1302001122_2.html

2. *December 09, The Patriot–News (PA)* — **Pump blamed in fire at Three Mile Island plant. An on–site fire brigade extinguished a small blaze at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, PA, on Sunday, December 7, plant officials said. The fire broke out around 2 a.m. after a pump in a Unit 1 turbine building malfunctioned,** according to a statement from the owner of the plant. No outside fire companies were requested, and there were no injuries. The fire was extinguished less than 10 minutes after the alarm sounded, the statement said. The affected area was part of the non–radiological side of the plant, according to officials. There was no release of radiation, and the fire posed no threat to the public, they said. **The cause of the malfunction remained under investigation.**

Source: http://pennlive.com/news/patriotnews/index.ssf?/base/news/10_70983802321910.xml

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Chemical Sector

Nothing to report.

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

3. *December 09, Government Computer News* — **Air Force centralizes network security force. To keep abreast of increasing network security vulnerabilities, the Air Force Network Operations and Security Center (AFNOSC) will open on April 1, 2004, at Barksdale Air Force Base, LA.** AFNOSC pools the resources of staff culled from the Air Force's Network Operations Center and Computer Emergency Response Team and a command and control operations center. Lt. Colonel Ronnie Edge, chief of the Air Force Network Operations Center at Maxwell Air Force Base's Gunter Annex, AL, said **the purpose of the security center will be to identify network security issues, vulnerabilities, attempted intrusions and attacks and then develop appropriate responses.** "Combining network operations and the help desk gives us enterprisewide situational awareness and helps us link what's happening on the network to the application," Edge said.

Source: http://www.gcnc.com/vol1_no1/daily-updates/24369-1.html

4. *December 08, Army News Service* — **Army chief wants soldiers to be adaptive. The Army's chief of staff said he wants soldiers to be more adaptive and capable of doing a wider range of missions with a greater degree of skill.** An example of more versatile soldiers is the 1,200 National Guard troops who will be reclassified from field artillery and air defense artillerymen to military police. The new job specialty will assist guardsmen in supporting the

war on terrorism. The retraining of the guardsmen supports General Peter J. Schoomaker's vision of reorganizing the Army to be more "Relevant and Ready." **Part of the Army's new transformation goal is to transform soldiers from pure specialties to being warriors first, Schoomaker said. Soldiers must be able to protect themselves, live in the field and understand the fundamentals of being a soldier, he added.** Increasing the number of military personnel currently serving is not the key to fighting terrorism, Schoomaker said. "If we add to the force, we run the risk of not having money for ammunition, fuel and the money to modernize," Schoomaker said. "You cannot overcome challenges with a mere quantitative edge, it's the quality of the soldier."

Source: http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/read.php?story_id_key=5481

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Banking and Finance Sector

5. *December 09, Associated Press* — **Officials sign UN anti–corruption pact. Top officials from around the globe signed the first worldwide anti–corruption treaty Tuesday, December 9, a move that may open banks in money havens to more scrutiny and allow some poor countries to recover billions of looted dollars.** U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft and Mexican President Vicente Fox were among the first to sign the UN Convention Against Corruption, a pact that requires countries to aid in investigations and return money to wherever it was stolen or embezzled from. **Of most interest to the United States are provisions requiring other countries to open up money laundering investigations, expedite extraditions and prevent the establishment of phantom banks with little legitimate business.** While the pact doesn't require countries to repeal banking secrecy laws or the immunity from prosecution granted to some politicians as part of their tenure in office, it does require safeguards so that politicians can be held accountable for their acts and banking records can be examined.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A50042–2003Dec 9.html>

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Transportation Sector

6. *December 10, The Straits Times (Singapore)* — **Japan can be more active in fighting terror at sea.** The first joint exercise between the Japan Coast Guard and Singapore Police Coast Guard last week should send a significant signal to Japanese and Asean leaders ahead of their summit talks in Tokyo on Thursday. The message is that more needs to be done not just to curb piracy in South–east Asian waters, but also **to counter the emerging threat of maritime–related terrorism to the global trading system. The frequency of pirate attacks in the region shows how ships are vulnerable to boarding and seizure by armed raiders — including, potentially, by terrorist groups.** To help with the identification and screening, small teams of officers from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency within the Department of Homeland Security are stationed in participating foreign ports, including Singapore.

Source: <http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/commentary/story/0.4386.224 472.00.html>

7. *December 09, Edmonton Journal (Canada)* — **Pipe bombs at airport first such incident in Canada since 9/11. The weekend seizure of two pipe bombs at Edmonton International Airport marked the first time such a device has been detected in Canada since new security restrictions came into effect after September 11, 2001, a Transport Canada official said Monday.** But the Canadian Air Transit Security Authority, established by Transport Canada after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, does not have a process to ban individuals caught trying to smuggle banned goods onto flights, said spokesperson Renee Fairweather. "We don't have a database to keep track of passengers," she said. "If something like this happens, we hand it over to the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police)." **The RCMP seized more than 100 firecrackers and two 71/2-centimetre pipe bombs late Saturday afternoon after security screening officers discovered the items in a piece of carry-on luggage as a woman was about to board a WestJet flight to Vancouver.** Leduc RCMP charged Joycelyn Anne Reily, 22, of Surrey, BC, with possession of an explosive substance. After terrorism was ruled out, police released Reily, saying she did not appear to have intentions to harm anyone. She is scheduled to appear Thursday morning in Leduc provincial court.

Source: <http://www.canada.com/edmonton/edmontonjournal/story.asp?id=C5906749-616C-4758-A643-9797D4A8117D>

8. *December 09, Prime-Tass (Russia)* — **Russian Railways Ministry tightens safety measures on railroad.** Russia's Railways Ministry has tightened security measures on Russia's railroad facilities following a terrorist act in Moscow on Friday, December 5, that claimed six lives, the ministry's press service reported. **The measures include providing a larger number of the ministry's security guards and a 24-hour patrol on all railroad facilities. Strategically important facilities including railroad car sheds, bridges, squares adjacent to railroad stations and waiting halls will be particularly guarded, the press service said.** The ministry will check compliance with automobile parking rules in places crowded with passengers. The transportation police with specially trained dogs inspect trains arriving from southern Russia especially carefully, the press service said.

Source: <http://www.prime-tass.com/news/6/opened/20031209/338945.asp>

9. *December 09, Associated Press* — **Pilots strike could cancel Waterloo flights in January. Iowa's Waterloo Regional Airport officials are expressing little concern about a potential pilots strike at Mesaba Airlines, which operates four of the airport's five daily flights. A strike would affect 600 daily departures Mesaba operates for Northwest, including four flights on 34-seat turboprops out of Waterloo.** A strike would not affect the airport's one daily jet flight, which is operated by Pinnacle Airlines. The union representing Mesaba Airlines pilots on Monday declined binding arbitration, moving them closer to a strike against the carrier that flies regional jets for Northwest Airlines. Under the federal Railway Labor Act, which governs airline contracts, either the union or management must reject binding arbitration before a strike can occur. **The National Mediation Board is expected to announce an exact strike deadline later this week, setting in motion a 30-day cooling off period before pilots could strike.** "If (a strike) does come to fruition, we would ask Northwest to put in a couple of jet flights," said airport director Brad Hagen. Pinnacle's CRJ planes seat close to 50 passengers. Northwest officials declined comment.

Source: http://www.wfcourier.com/articles/2003/12/09/news/top_news/

[43f1830748e01a1b86256df7004dd7b5.txt](#)

10. *December 09, WPBFC TV (Florida)* — **Man accused of having loaded gun at MIA. A South Florida airline passenger has bonded out of jail after he was arrested for trying to carry a loaded gun onto a Los Angeles-bound flight at Miami International Airport (MIA),** officials said. Authorities said the gun was discovered by a security screener inside a briefcase that belonged to Charles Paul Guanci. Guanci is charged with carrying a concealed weapon. Source: <http://www.thewpbfchannel.com/news/2692435/detail.html>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

11. *December 09, Associated Press* — **USPS posts surplus. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) finished 2003 with a \$3.9 billion surplus, which will help keep postal rates where they are through 2006, postal officials said Tuesday.** That was \$300 million better than expected for the 2003 fiscal year. Nearly all of the surplus was used to reduce the agency's outstanding debt. **Chief financial officer Richard Strasser said the results were achieved despite a decline in first-class mail and noted that the Post Office had been able to make significant savings through a reduction in staff and other cost-cutting.** The Post Office had a net income of \$900 million, Strasser said. And a change in the law that allowed the agency to stop overpaying into retirement accounts increased its net income by an additional \$3 billion. Total mail volume in 2003 declined by about 600,000 pieces, the second straight year that mail volume fell. "This year's increase in advertising mail and packages did not provide us with as much revenue as the same amount of first-class mail would have," Strasser said. **Strasser said that while postal finances look good in the near term, "continued declines in first-class mail volumes, continued growth in delivery addresses," and changes in the marketplace threaten the ability to finance the agency in the future.** Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,105256,00.html>

12. *December 09, U.S. Postal Service* — **Winter storm has blocked access to mailboxes and other delivery points. In many parts of the New York Metro Area, because of this weekend's snowstorm, letter carriers are unable to make door or curbside deliveries if the approach to a customer's mailbox is blocked by snow.** Carriers are not allowed to attempt door delivery when there is a heavy buildup of snow and ice on sidewalks, steps, or porches. They are also not allowed to dismount for curbside boxes blocked by snow and ice buildup. Snow must be cleared to the curbside for at least six feet on each side of the mailbox so the carrier may approach and leave without backing up. "Snow and ice hazards cause numerous accidents and injuries to many people, especially letter carriers," said David L. Solomon, U.S. Postal Service New York Metro Vice President, Area Operations. Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/031209/nytu097_1.html

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Agriculture Sector

13. *December 08, Reuters* — **U.S. House backs two-year delay in food-of-origin labels. Grocers and foodmakers would not have to put country-of-origin labels on meat, fruits, vegetables, and peanuts until late 2006, a two-year delay, under a bill passed by the U.S. House Monday.** The delay was part of a \$375 billion bill that funds the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and several other federal departments for fiscal 2004. It was scheduled for a vote in the Senate Tuesday, where objections might postpone a vote until January. Now voluntary, country-of-origin labeling was scheduled under a 2002 law to become mandatory September 30, 2004. The deadline would become September 30, 2006, under the bill passed by the House. **The only items still to face a 2004 deadline for labeling would be farm-raised and wild fish.** The USDA estimates a cost of \$580 million to \$3.9 billion to business to comply with the law. The House Agriculture Committee may look into a better-designed voluntary labeling system next year, a committee staff worker said.
Source: http://www.forbes.com/business/newswire/2003/12/08/rtr117339_7.html

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Food Sector

14. *December 09, Food Production Daily* — **Food poisoning bacteria focus. More than 40 percent of bacteria found in chicken on sale in Switzerland is resistant to at least one antibiotic, say researchers.** Researchers from the Swiss Federal Veterinary Office collected raw poultry meat samples from 122 retail outlets across Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and tested their antibiotic resistance. **From 415 meat samples, they isolated 91 strains of Campylobacter, 59 percent of which were sensitive to all the antibiotics tested.** According to the results 19 strains were resistant to one antibiotic, nine strains to two antibiotics, and eight strains were resistant to at least three antibiotics. Two strains were resistant to five antibiotics. One of these showed resistance to ciprofloxacin, tetracycline, and erythromycin, the most important antibiotics for treating Campylobacter infection in humans. **The results could have wider implications for treating food poisoning. The bacteria, Campylobacter, causes between five and 14 percent of all diarrhea illness worldwide.** Children and people with a weakened immune system often take antibiotics to prevent the infection from spreading to the bloodstream and causing life threatening septicaemia. In the U.S., 90 percent of Campylobacter strains isolated from poultry meat had resistance to at least one, and 45 percent to at least two antibiotics, commented the researchers.
Source: <http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/news-NG.asp?id=48332>

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Water Sector

15. *December 09, CNN* — **Italy on alert for water poisoner. Italian supermarkets were on high alert Tuesday in an attempt to thwart a mystery assailant who has been injecting bleach and acetone into plastic bottles of water. Nearly a dozen people have been taken to hospitals with stomach pains after drinking contaminated bottled water over the past two weeks.** On Monday alone, Italians reported more than 20 cases of apparent tampering with bottles of different brands in different regions of the country. "The phenomenon is spreading

like wildfire," the chief investigator in Rome told *Il Messaggero* daily, sketching out the police strategy. Police say the saboteur, or copycat saboteurs, use a syringe to inject small amounts of poisonous liquids like bleach, acetone, or ammonia just below the cap. In most cases, consumers have noticed a strange smell or the tell-tale pinpricks and handed the bottles to the police. **No one has claimed responsibility for the tampering, but police say a radical anti-capitalist activist, environmentalist, or commercial sabotage could be behind the incidents.** Thousands of plastic bottles have been withdrawn from shelves and security guards are keeping a close eye on aisles where beverages are kept. Security cameras have also been trained on the shelves. **Incidents have been reported in more than 20 cities throughout the country. Tampering with milk and juice has also been reported.**

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/europe/12/09/italy.water.r.eut/>

16. *December 09, Edmonton Journal* — **Alberta's new water strategy.** Alberta, Canada, will ask residents to take shorter showers, water their plants less often, and take other conservation measures to reduce water use by 30 percent as part of the province's new strategy aimed at averting a looming water crisis. The water strategy includes eventually placing restrictions on industrial water usage and pushing ahead with a plan to limit industrial and population growth in areas with limited water supplies. Separate water-use agreements will be forged for big industries, including the oil-and-gas sector and agriculture. **The conservation plan calls for nearly \$1 billion over 10 years to operate and upgrade the province's drinking water system, including overhauling hundreds of treatment facilities or mothballing them in favor of regional centers serving dozens of smaller communities.** The plan would see a series of pipelines move water from major centers to outlying communities. **The policy is expected to save money ultimately, but also to reduce the chance that any region's water supply could become contaminated by ensuring strict controls at a very few treatment centers that would be responsible for supplying all the province's demands.**

Source: <http://canada.com/national/story.asp?id=D64C8B13-F9CF-432B-9241-7FA6B2DF793B>

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Public Health Sector

17. *December 09, Associated Press* — **CDC to monitor children's flu complications.** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plans to closely watch flu complications among children. **A new concern is the rise of a common drug-resistant staph infection, known as MRSA, that is complicating efforts to treat children with the flu, an official with the CDC said. Tim Uyeki, epidemiologist with the influenza branch of CDC, said that some children have died from staph infections a phenomenon the CDC has not seen before.** Flu complications for children have always been dire: pneumonia, kidney and heart failure, possible brain damage. "We've just never seen them in the proportions we've seen them this year," said Steve Schexnayder, chief of pediatric critical care at Arkansas Children's Hospital. From Texas to California, children's hospitals have been swamped with sick children many of them desperately ill. Children's Medical Center in Dallas has seen more than 500 kids with the flu since October. One day last week, two dozen more appeared, most with enough lung disease to be put on ventilators. Doctors say some children are coming into hospitals with so much damage they are put on heart-lung bypass machines.

Source: http://abcnews.go.com/wire/Living/ap20031208_2210.html

18. *December 09, Associated Press* — **Flu vaccine shortage only in U.S. The World Health Organization (WHO) said Tuesday that it is aware of reports of flu vaccine running out in areas of the United States, but said supplies appear to be adequate around the world.** Spokesman Iain Simpson said the UN health agency had heard the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and prevention were looking into the possibility of a vaccine shortage in the United States. "But as far as we're aware globally, no there's no shortage," said Simpson. **Health authorities in different parts of the United States said they were running out of flu vaccine after demand soared because of reports that this year's epidemic was having a heavier impact than usual. Shortages have also been reported in Singapore.** Simpson said WHO monitors the annual flu season, including availability of vaccine, through a network of health professionals who report outbreaks and other developments. Simpson said there might be a shortage at one doctor's clinic or at one hospital, but government authorities would have to declare that there's a shortage in an entire country to raise the level of concern.

Source: http://abcnews.go.com/wire/Living/ap20031209_1002.html

19. *December 09, University of California–Berkeley* — **Gene mutation leads to super–virulent strain of TB. Disabling a set of genes in a strain of the tuberculosis (TB) bacteria surprisingly led to a mutant form of the pathogen that multiplied more quickly and was more lethal than its natural counterpart,** according to a new study led by researchers at the University of California, Berkeley. Two weeks after infection, researchers found significantly more bacteria from the organs of mice infected with the mutated tuberculosis bacteria than for mice infected with the unmodified, or wild–type, strain. By 27 weeks, the mutant–infected mice started to die, while their counterparts infected with the wild–type strain survived until the end of the experiment at 41 weeks. **The researchers say the study sheds light on the mechanisms used by a pathogen that now infects one–third of the world's population and kills two million people per year.** The results were unexpected because prior studies pointed to the *mce1* operon, the collection of genes that researchers disabled in the TB bacteria, as an important virulence factor that helped the organism invade cells. "This is one of the very few hypervirulent organisms ever created," said Lisa Morici, a lead author of the study. "This breaks a long–standing assumption among scientists that disabling a potential virulence gene weakens a pathogen."

Source: http://www.innovations–report.com/html/reports/life_sciences/report–24046.html

20. *December 08, University Of California – Riverside* — **Botulism detection system. University of California–Riverside researchers have developed a device that speeds the detection of a strain of botulism neurotoxin from hours or days to minutes, making treatment or vaccination more effective.** "Of course a good deal of testing needs to be done first," Parpura said. "What we've done is shown proof that the principle works, said UC Riverside Professor Vladimir Parpura" **While effective, the process is not yet ready for practical application.** "Right now the issue is that it's linked to an atomic–force microscope, an expensive piece of equipment, which means it cannot be used on a widespread basis," Parpura said. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists botulism as one of the six most dangerous bioterrorism threats. **This also means that it will find uses in fields outside medical toxin sensors," said UC Riverside Professor Umar Mohideen, adding that the process can be used in food and water quality applications.** The key to the process, however, is its timeliness, according to the

researchers. Antitoxin vaccinations can work only if applied quickly, before the onset of symptoms.

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2003/12/031205052602.htm>

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Government Sector

21. *December 09, Federal Computer Week* — Stone assumes top spot at TSA. Former U.S. Navy Rear Admiral David Stone is the new acting administrator for the Homeland Security Department's Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Stone replaces Admiral James Loy, the former TSA administrator who officially became deputy secretary for DHS last week. Since August 2003, Stone had been TSA deputy chief of staff, following an assignment as the first federal security director at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). During Stone's tenure at LAX, Transportation Security officials deployed the largest federalized screener workforce in the United States. TSA officials also implemented an electronically-checked baggage-screening program. Stone graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1974, and retired as Rear Admiral in April 2002. His most recent operational command was the Nimitz battle group. President Bush nominated Loy to fill the deputy secretary's post at DHS in late October.

Source: <http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2003/1208/web-tsa-12-09-03.asp>

22. *December 08, Department of Homeland Security* — Department of Homeland Security launches Listo Campaign. On Monday, December 8, the Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with The Advertising Council and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, **launched the Listo Campaign, a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign that is designed to educate and empower Spanish-speaking Americans and residents to prepare for and respond to potential terrorist attacks. Listo is the Spanish-language version of Homeland Security's Ready Campaign.** "We want everyone to get the critical information they need to be prepared for potential terrorist attacks and other emergencies," said Tom Ridge, Secretary of Homeland Security. "We have had great success with the English version of the campaign, but feel it's very important to get this critical message to the 37 million Hispanics in the U.S." The Listo campaign offers practical suggestions to increase preparedness: make an emergency supply kit, create a family communication plan and be informed about potential threats. The ads direct Hispanics to call 1-800-237-3239 to access a free brochure or to visit <http://www.listo.gov> a new, comprehensive website, where they can learn the best ways to protect themselves and their families against terrorism.

Source: http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/press_release/press_release_0311.xml

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Emergency Services Sector

23. *December 09, Firehouse.com* — New firefighting tool. A fire-retardant gel credited with helping save roughly 500 homes and businesses in California's San Bernardino and San Diego counties eventually will be carried aboard every state fire engine, officials say. "It

allows us to coat a house and move on . . . so that we don't have to put a fire engine in every driveway," Chief Dan Lang said from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection headquarters in Sacramento. All forestry trucks in the two counties were carrying the gooey slime when October's catastrophic wildland fires erupted throughout Southern California. The gels helped firefighters save about 200 structures in San Bernardino mountain communities and an estimated 375 homes in San Diego County during the Cedar and Paradise fires and last year's Pines Fire, California Department of Forestry officials said. **Because of its ability to retain water for several hours, gel can be air-dropped directly onto flames, unlike water and conventional fire retardant, which evaporate too quickly, officials say. But gels aren't a panacea, fire officials caution. The slimy concoctions are expensive, and there are limitations on how much can be carried aboard a fire engine, how gels can be applied, and how long they'll remain effective during a fire.**

Source: <http://www6.lexisnexis.com/wpublisher/EndUser?Action=UserDisplayFullDocument&orgId=34&topicId=17906&docId=1:64993217&start=1>

24. *December 09, Appen Newspapers (Alpharetta, GA)* — **Emergency system could call residents.** In an emergency, the first thing people think to do is call for help. But what if 911 could call them, instead? That's exactly what the Forsyth Sheriffs Office wants to be able to do. The Forsyth County Commission has approved a plan that would give the communications center the ability to call residents to warn them of an emergency. Commissioners approved spending \$67,205.00 on a reverse 911 system, which could be protecting residents by early next year. **Making nearly one hundred phone calls per minute, the reverse 911 equipment would allow officials to get the word out quickly. Officials with the Sheriffs Office say the system could be used for everything from evacuation notices to information about a missing child or elderly person.** Local officials say such a system could be of great benefit, providing officials with another way to warn residents. Laurie Wood, Deputy Director of the Forsyth County Emergency Management Agency, said she welcomes the addition of a reverse 911 system, saying it could benefit residents in many situations. Wood noted that there may be times when a reverse 911 system may not be able to reach residents, saying if phone lines had been compromised by severe weather, or if an explosion hazard existed they would have to rely on conventional means to spread the word.

Source: <http://www.northfulton.com/DisplayArticle.asp?ID={922B34A8-7F36-4B35-B183-9057174A2374}>

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Information and Telecommunications Sector

25. *December 10, Washington Post* — **UN sets aside debate over control of Internet. In a last-minute meeting this weekend before the start of this week's World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva, Switzerland, representatives set aside a debate over whether national governments, rather than private-sector groups, should be in charge of managing and governing the Internet around the globe. UN member states instead will ask Secretary General Kofi Annan to put together a panel of experts from government, industry and the public to study the issue and draft policy recommendations before the high-tech summit reconvenes in Tunisia in 2005.** Leaders had planned to wade into a debate over the way Website and e-mail addresses are doled out, standards are set for Internet security

and the thorny question of how Internet-based transactions are taxed, among other things. Some developing nations have complained that the world's most visible Internet governance body -- the U.S.-based, nonprofit Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) -- hasn't adequately represented non-U.S. interests, and should be replaced with a governmental group overseen by the United Nations. **ICANN has managed the Internet's global addressing system since 1998 under an agreement with the U.S. government.**

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A47327-2003Dec 8.html>

26. *December 09, Associated Press* — **New anti-spam legislation compels consumers to hit 'reply' to e-mails.** As the deluge of unsolicited pitches worsened during the Internet's growth, experts have cautioned computer users against doing what comes naturally: Reply to unwanted e-mails to demand an end to them. The reason? Unscrupulous spammers deem each such demand a verification that someone actually received their e-mails—and promptly sent dozens more to the same address. But **the "can spam" legislation that Congress approved Monday requires unsolicited e-mails to include a mechanism so recipients could indicate they did not want future mass mailings. The legislation also will prohibit senders of unsolicited commercial e-mail from disguising their identity by using a false return address or misleading subject line, and it will prohibit senders from harvesting addresses off Websites.** President Bush has indicated he intends to sign the measure into law. Indeed, the White House revamped its own e-mail system this summer over a flood of so-called spam. **The anti-spam bill encourages the Federal Trade Commission to create a do-not-spam list of e-mail addresses and includes penalties for spammers of up to five years in prison in rare circumstances.**

Source: <http://securityfocus.com/news/7596>

27. *December 08, CNET News.com* — **Yahoo answers IM security flaw.** Yahoo has issued an update to its instant-messaging software, in order to address a security flaw found in the application. The company said **the security issue was related to a buffer overflow, which is a common security vulnerability in computer programs written in C and C++ that allows more information to be added to a chunk of memory than it was designed to hold.** Typical problems involved in an instant-messaging-related buffer overflow might include an involuntarily log-out of an IM session, a crash of browsing software applications, and a possible introduction of executable code. According to Yahoo, only a small percentage of the company's IM software users might be vulnerable as a result of the flaw. Yahoo said customers who changed their Explorer security settings from "medium" to "low" could be affected. The company said that even in that case, an attacker would have to lure a user of Yahoo IM to view malicious HTML code. Most often this would entail clicking a link sent through IM that leads back to a Web page hosting the code. Before changing an IE security setting to low, individuals are warned by the browser that the setting is considered "highly unsafe." **Yahoo said it has not yet heard of any successful attacks based on the buffer flaw.** The update is available on the Yahoo Website: <http://messenger.yahoo.com/messenger/security/>

Source: <http://news.zdnet.co.uk/communications/0,39020336,39118352,0,0.htm>

Current Alert Levels	
 AlertCon: 1 out of 4 https://gtoc.iss.net	 Security Focus ThreatCon: 1 out of 4 http://analyzer.securityfocus.com/
Current Virus and Port Attacks	
Virus:	#1 Virus in the United States: WORM_LOVGATE.G Source: http://wtc.trendmicro.com/wtc/wmap.html , Trend World Micro Virus Tracking Center [Infected Computers, North America, Past 24 hours, #1 in United States]
Top 10 Target Ports	139 (netbios-ssn), 137 (netbios-ns), 445 (microsoft-ds), 113 (ident), 135 (epmap), 1043 (---), 17300 (Kuang2TheVirus), 80 (www), 1433 (ms-sql-s), 21 (ftp) Source: http://isc.incidents.org/top10.html ; Internet Storm Center

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General Sector

28. *December 09, Reuters* — **U.S. warns Taliban may attack Afghan conference. The Taliban and its militant allies were likely to step up attacks in Afghanistan in coming days in an attempt to disrupt a major political gathering to thrash out details of a new constitution, the U.S. warned on Tuesday, December 9.** Around 500 delegates will gather in Kabul this weekend for a Loya Jirga or grand assembly, which is expected to take several weeks to finalize a constitution to take Afghanistan to its first-ever presidential elections next year. U.S. ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad said he expected militants from the ousted Taliban regime, Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network and the Hezb-i-Islami organization of renegade warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, would try to disrupt proceedings. But Khalilzad said the assembly would go ahead, and said authorities would remain "very focused" to ensure security. **The Taliban has dismissed the Loya Jirga as a U.S.-sponsored "charade," and warned that anyone attending deserved to die.** A draft of the constitution already published envisions aims to unite the war-torn nation under the banner of Islam, but does not specifically call for Islamic sharia law to be the basis of legislation as it was under Taliban rule.
 Source: <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=worldNews&storyID=3962353>

29. *December 09, The Christian Science Monitor* — **Russia rises as a target of terror. A female suicide bomber detonated a powerful explosive belt Tuesday, December 9, killing six people and injuring 12 just a few steps from Red Square, the Kremlin and the State Duma.** The attack appears to have been aimed at the Duma, the lower house of parliament. It was the fourth terror attack in six months. **The chain of suicide bombings is reshaping the political landscape of the nation, not to mention the personal habits of Russians.** "I feel a growing disquiet," says Nonna Gazayeva, who works for a fashion firm located a block from the bomb site. "Some people are changing their habits... and parents are afraid for their children." **Officials were quick to blame terrorists from the breakaway republic of**

Chechnya for the attack. On Friday, an alleged Chechen suicide bomber killed 44 people on a commuter train in southern Russia. Terror bombings have become a dread feature of life in Russia, particularly in Moscow and in southern areas abutting Chechnya. **Over 100 people died from the effects of toxic knockout gas sprayed by security forces into a central Moscow theater, where Chechen fighters -- including 19 female shakhidy, or "martyrs" -- were holding 800 hostages, just over a year ago. Sixteen died when two women shakhidy blew themselves up at a Moscow rock concert in July.**

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/1210/p01s02-woeu.html>

30. December 09, Washington Post — Temblor felt in Washington, DC area. A mild earthquake shook the Washington area on Tuesday afternoon, rattling homes and office buildings but causing no significant damage and no casualties. **The quake, centered 20 to 30 miles west of Richmond, struck at 3:59 p.m. and was felt as far away as Washington, DC, and the Maryland suburbs, authorities said. The U.S. Geological Survey in Reston, Va., pegged the temblor at 4.5 on the Richter scale.** Carolyn Bell, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Geological Survey, said the earthquake could be felt from Baltimore–Washington International Airport all the way down to North Carolina. In Charlottesville, VA, Larry J. Sabato, a University of Virginia political scientist, told interviewers on NBC4–TV, "It shook my house pretty violently. I lost some glassware and pieces of china. I've been here in Charlottesville 33 years and never felt another earthquake." In Fredericksburg, the quake rolled through the downtown area with enough force to shake some buildings and knock some things off walls, but there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries, said Sgt. Paul Peterson of the city's police department.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A50085-2003Dec 9.html>

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