



Department of Homeland Security Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 30 March 2004

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



[For info click here](#)

www.whitehouse.gov/homeland

Daily Overview

- Reuters reports that OPEC producers remained divided on Monday over whether or not to bow to consumer country demands and open the taps to rein in runaway oil prices. (See item [2](#))
- The Washington Post reports that the EPA is asking state governments to describe how they are protecting children from excessive lead in drinking water, citing recent problems at schools and day-care centers in Washington, DC, and elsewhere. (See item [19](#))
- The New York Times reports that the Pentagon has released parts of an unclassified document that concluded that the country is woefully ill-prepared to detect and respond to a bioterrorist assault. (See item [20](#))

DHS/IAIP Update *Fast Jump*

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

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

Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture](#); [Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health](#)

Federal and State: [Government](#); [Emergency Services](#)

IT and Cyber: [Information and Telecommunications](#); [Internet Alert Dashboard](#)

Other: [General](#); [DHS/IAIP Web Information](#)

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. *March 29, The Christian Science Monitor* — **After nuclear's meltdown, a cautious revival.** A quarter century ago this week, a nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island, in Middletown, PA, underwent a partial meltdown. No one was killed and only a small amount of radioactivity escaped. **Since that time, no American utility has built a brand new nuclear power plant. However, increasing power blackouts, rising natural-gas prices, and concerns about**

greenhouse gases have changed public attitudes. Here and there, the nuclear industry is beginning to stir. Today, a fifth of the United States' electricity comes from 103 commercial nuclear reactors. The most visible evidence of new interest remains invisible to most. "It's hard to tell from the outside," says William Baxter, one of three directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority. However, inside TVA's massive concrete plant in Browns Ferry, AL, a \$1.8 billion construction project is under way to modernize and upgrade a reactor that hasn't been operating for nearly 20 years. If the project is completed by 2007, as expected, Unit I of Browns Ferry would become America's first nuclear power unit brought online in the 21st century.

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0329/p12s02-usec.html>

2. *March 29, Reuters* — **OPEC split on oil cut as prices ease. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) producers remained divided on Monday, March 29, over whether or not to bow to consumer country demands and open the taps to rein in runaway oil prices. OPEC is under pressure to reverse or postpone scheduled supply cuts that recently forced U.S. oil prices to a 13-year peak.** Some in OPEC admit prices are uncomfortably high and favor postponing a February deal agreed in Algiers to cut supplies in April. "The Algeria agreement can be reviewed, it is not compulsory," said UAE oil minister Obaid al-Nasseri. "There are different opinions that will be discussed including postponing implementing the Algeria agreement." Others blame speculative investment funds for inflaming the market and worry the funds are showing signs of preparing to exit the market, causing an oil price avalanche. OPEC's February deal to cut production by a million barrels a day from April 1 sent U.S. prices roaring two weeks ago above \$38 a barrel, the highest close since the 1990–1991 Gulf War.

Source: http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=568&ncid=749&e=3&u=/nm/20040329/bs_nm/energy_opec_dc

3. *March 28, Associated Press* — **Utilities look to coal as gas prices rise.** Coal, spurned for decades by power plant builders, is enjoying something of a renaissance as natural gas prices drive up the cost of generating electricity. Utility companies are contemplating new coal-fired electric power plants for the first time since the early 1990s. **Utilities turned to natural gas for new power in the 1990s because the plants are cheaper to build and cleaner to operate than those run on coal. However, then came the jump in natural gas prices. Fuel costs for gas-fired plants are as high as 4 cents per kilowatt hour, while coal plants come in at about 1 cent,** said Robert McIlvaine of McIlvaine Co., an energy consulting firm in Illinois. Nationwide, as many as 90 new coal-fired plants are being considered with a combined capacity of 50,000 megawatts, McIlvaine said. That equals about 7 percent of the total power generation available in the United States and carries a price tag of about \$75 billion. Over the next 10 years, the United States will need about 140,000 megawatts of increased power, with about one-half or more to come from coal plants, McIlvaine said.

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31463-2004Mar_28.html

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

Chemical Sector

4. *March 29, Financial Times* — **Lyondell to buy Millennium. Millennium Chemicals, the world's second largest producer of titanium oxide, has agreed to be sold to Lyondell**

Chemical in an all-stock deal worth about \$1 billion, excluding debt. A successful sale to Lyondell would end Millennium's life as a publicly traded company in the U.S., which began in October 1996 when the former unit of Hanson Industries demerged from the British industrial giant along with Imperial Tobacco. **The companies on Monday, March 29, said their combination would create North America's third largest chemicals producer, with combined revenues of more than \$11 billion and about 10,000 employees.** Lyondell's main business is the production of propylene oxide and its derivatives. The Texas-based company is also one of America's largest refiners through its majority stake in Lyondell-Citgo. By taking over Millennium, it will acquire the Maryland-based company's strong position in the production of titanium oxide, a key ingredient in the textile and paper industries. Monday's announcement comes as many observers are predicting that "general industrial" companies -- including manufacturing and chemicals -- are set for more consolidation in coming months. Source: <http://news.ft.com/servlet/ContentServer?pagename=FT.com/StoryFT/FullStory&c=StoryFT&cid=1079419999450>

5. *March 26, Dayton Daily News* — **OSHA: Isotec workers lacked training.** Employees at Isotec Inc. the morning of September 21 had no training or operating standards for the hazardous procedures they performed, or for emergency shutdown, citations of the chemical company by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reveal. That lack of written directions came to light as a result of a federal investigation of an explosion nearly six months ago at Isotec that caused evacuation of more than 500 homes within a 1-mile radius of the plant in Miamisburg, OH. In a report released Wednesday, March 24, OSHA said Isotec employees operated a new process with no training. An employee was ordered to hook up a vacuum line "to the vacuum pump for the purpose of evacuating nitric oxide without being trained on the nitric oxide process," the violation stated. "Furthermore, there were no established and documented procedures for this process." **OSHA investigators determined that the parent company had not developed or implemented procedures for emergency shutdown, operating limits or consequences in deviations that might occur during the plant's distillation process.** Also, the company had no written procedures to maintain equipment used in the chemical operations, OSHA reported. Source: <http://www.daytondailynews.com/localnews/content/localnews/daily/0326isotec.html>

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

Defense Industrial Base Sector

6. *March 26, Govexec.com* — **Military bolsters maritime security role. The U.S. military is shoring up its role in maritime security in response to ongoing concerns that terrorists might use cargo or passenger vessels to launch an attack against the country, officials said Thursday, March 25. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld recently issued an order clarifying and emphasizing the Navy's ability to conduct maritime intercept operations,** said Paul McHale, assistant secretary of defense for homeland security. Additionally, the Navy and the Coast Guard are negotiating a memorandum of agreement for closer coordination in maritime security. "Our goal is to identify an enemy threat as far from our shores as possible and to employ military capabilities for the defeat of that threat," McHale said. McHale said the order clarifies the Navy's ability to engage, search, interdict and, if necessary, defeat vessels that might contain a terrorist threat, such as weapons of mass destruction or cruise missiles. The

agreement between the Navy and Coast Guard "is simply a recognition that our nation is best defended through the close coordination and combined capabilities of both services," he added.
Source: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0304/032604c1.htm>

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

Banking and Finance Sector

- 7. *March 28, Mail on Sunday* — Lloyds TSB fake e-mail alert. Online customers of UK bank Lloyds TSB have been warned to ignore a fraudulent e-mail asking them to confirm personal banking details. The rogue e-mail, which carries Lloyds TSB's black horse logo, mentions a new security system and contains a link to a page that asks for the customer's user identification and password. Though the e-mail looks authentic, it has been sent randomly and is not targeted at Lloyds TSB customers or internet bank users. The bank is hoping to close down the fraudulent site as soon as possible. Lloyds TSB customers are not the first to be targeted by fraudsters in this way — a practice known in banking circles as phishing. Other High Street banks have been hit in the past, including Barclays and NatWest.**
Source: <http://www.thisismoney.com/20040328/ht76324.html>

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

Transportation Sector

- 8. *March 29, China Post* — Terrorists and pirates could join forces. Conditions in Southeast Asia's Malacca Strait are conducive for terrorists and pirates to mount joint operations aimed at choking the busy shipping lane and disrupting global commerce, a U.S. security analyst said. Peter Chalk, a policy analyst on international security with the U.S. think-tank Rand Corporation, said that terrorist groups could also exploit weaknesses and stage a maritime attack as security on onshore facilities tightens. One area where terrorist groups and pirates could team up is the Malacca Strait, a narrow waterway bordered by Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia that is one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, he said at the Asia Pacific Maritime Summit. Southeast Asian waters, particularly in the Strait near the Indonesian side, accounted for 60 percent of the 1,921 actual and attempted pirate attacks globally between 1991 and 2003, making it the world's most pirate-prone region. Extremist movements such as Jemaah Islamiyah and separatist Muslim groups like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the southern Philippines and Indonesia's Free Aceh Movement also operate in the region. With extremist and rebel groups hampered by limited capabilities to stage a maritime attack, pirates could "contract out" their services to hijack ships which could be used to smuggle weapons and personnel or cause a collision to block shipping lanes.**
Source: <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/detail.asp?ID=47266&GRP=A>
- 9. *March 29, Bizjournals* — TSA to test registered traveler program. The U.S. government plans to begin testing a registered traveler system in June that promises to speed frequent fliers through airport security. Individuals who pay a fee and allow the government to perform background checks on them would be subject to minimal screening. Biometric**

technology would be used to confirm these passengers' identities. The program is a "high priority for us," said Adm. David M. Stone, acting administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). **Stone told a congressional committee that TSA will conduct a 90-day pilot of the system at five airports, Boston's Logan International, Washington Reagan National, Dallas Love Field, McGhee Tyson in Knoxville, TN, and West Palm Beach, FL.** TSA would then evaluate the results. The registered traveler program would supplement a computerized prescreening system the TSA is developing for all airline passengers, Stone says.

Source: <http://www.bizjournals.com/extraedge/washingtonbureau/archiv e/2004/03/29/bureau1.html>

[[Return to top](#)]

Postal and Shipping Sector

10. *March 26, WLBT Boston* — **USPS introduces online shipping.** The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is now offering "click n ship." **The Web-based program lets you load your shipping info, print a label, pay for postage with a credit card, and arrange for a carrier to pick up your box from your doorstep.** USPS acknowledges it's playing catch-up when it comes to technology. This program is aimed at bringing the post office up to date and bringing service for consumers who'd rather do something online than stand in line.

Source: <http://www.wlbt.com/Global/story.asp?S=1738692>

[[Return to top](#)]

Agriculture Sector

11. *March 29, USAgNet* — **Vietnam to announce end of bird flu. Vietnam plans to declare itself free of bird flu on Tuesday, March 30, even though United Nations agencies fear new outbreaks and despite a dispute over the cause of a boy's death this month.** Scientists say at least 16 people, including the boy, have died in Vietnam where the disease swept through 57 of its 64 cities and provinces, resulting in the mass cull of some 38 million poultry. **Bui Quang Anh, director of the Ministry of Agriculture's Veterinary Department, said that a declaration will be made Tuesday afternoon so the country can start "restocking the poultry stock and replanning the poultry industry."** No outbreaks among poultry have been reported since February 26, but international health and agriculture officials say that's no guarantee there won't be a recurrence.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.cfm?Id=336&yr=2004>

12. *March 29, Reuters* — **Government's lab not secure for BSE work. The U.S. government's main laboratory for testing mad cow disease, or BSE, located in an Iowa strip mall, is not secure enough to store dangerous pathogens like the brain-wasting disease, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) investigators said on Monday, March 29.** "The building housing the strip mall is close to other commercial businesses and has limited security at the entry and exit points," said a report by the USDA'S Office of Inspector General, which conducts independent audits and investigations of USDA programs. The facility in Ames, IA,

run by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Agency discovered the first U.S. case of mad cow disease in December after testing brain tissue samples from an infected cow in Washington state. The 27–page report said the laboratory has made improvements in security and record–keeping since the agency's first investigation in March 2002. **However, investigators repeated their concern that scientists and students were allowed "unlimited access" to the laboratory without the USDA requiring background checks.** "With unrestricted access, unauthorized personnel having knowledge of a laboratory's inventory could remove a biological agent or piece of equipment and place it in a terrorist's hands long before the theft was discovered," the report said. The USDA has verified no dangerous animal diseases were stored any longer at the Ames facility.

Source: http://abcnews.go.com/wire/US/reuters20040329_326.html

13. *March 26, U.S. Department of Agriculture* — **USDA provides new tool for first responders. To prepare for the intentional and unintentional introductions of animal diseases into the nation's food production pathway, Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman Friday, March 26, announced the release of an informational compact disc for federal and state agriculture first responders.** The compact disc, "Food Security: The Threat to American Livestock," was developed in conjunction with Auburn University. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, (APHIS) helps to ensure the safety of all animal and plant products from the farm to the food distribution centers located around the country. The agency has embarked on an extensive program to enhance its readiness to detect, deter, and respond to terrorist events involving plant or animal pathogens. State and federal officials who have a role to fulfill in the event of an unintentional or intentional threat to U.S. livestock will also have access to this data bank. **APHIS' compact disc offers comprehensive information on infectious disease threats to livestock, animal disease awareness briefings, standard veterinary medical information for diagnosing such diseases, and emergency information gathering and reporting mechanisms.**

Source: <http://www.usda.gov/Newsroom/0122.04.html>

14. *March 26, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service* — **Oak disease detection program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Friday, March 26, announced that it is regulating the interstate movement of Phytophthora ramorum host and associated host plants from all California nurseries.** Regulating *P. ramorum*, or sudden oak death, is part of the APHIS detection and management program. Since it first appeared in coastal California in 1995, the disease is known to affect 59 different host and associate host species. **Beginning March 29, California nursery owners who want to ship listed plants must undergo a nursery stock inspection before those plants can be transported across state lines.** Currently, 12 California counties are regulated for the disease that infects and destroys oak and tanoak trees. The new measure prohibits an estimated 1,500 California nurseries from shipping plants susceptible to *P. ramorum* until those nurseries can be inspected and found free of the pathogen. USDA will also launch a national survey to determine if *P. ramorum* is causing disease symptoms on hosts and associated hosts in other parts of the country.

Source: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2004/03/sod_ppq.html

[[Return to top](#)]

Food Sector

15. *March 29, Dow Jones Newswires* — **U.S. tells trade partners that U.S. Beef is safe. The U.S. has formally notified its trading partners that U.S. beef is safe to eat, a principal step toward negotiations to lift bans they imposed because of mad cow disease.** The letters to his counterparts abroad from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) chief veterinarian, Ron DeHaven, were accompanied by summaries of what the U.S. has done to protect beef safety and search for other cases of mad cow. **About 50 countries banned U.S. beef since bovine spongiform encephalopathy was identified in December in a cow in Washington state.** "This information demonstrates that any remaining trade restrictions against U.S. beef and beef products can be lifted without compromising safety," DeHaven said. The USDA urged the countries that banned the import of U.S. beef to "modify any remaining trade restrictions." Mexico and some other trading partners eased restrictions before DeHaven's letter. Others, such as Japan, a major export market for American beef, have kept full-scale bans in place.
Source: http://www.agprofessional.com/show_story.php?id=24279
16. *March 28, Boston Globe* — **Food tracking delayed. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had intended to set final rules by the end of March that would give companies as little as four hours to provide data on the ingredients and location of their products.** Compliance would be phased in, with big companies beginning in six months and small ones in 18 months. **After receiving hundreds of comments, the FDA has decided to give the issue more thought and now hopes to have the final rules by the end of May.** The rules are based on the Bioterrorism Act of 2002. But officials could use the law's food security provisions to trace products with bacteria from poor plant sanitation and other contaminants. The FDA wants food-handling companies, including processors, shippers, and sellers, to keep records of what they bought, from whom they bought it, and where they sent the products. The goal is to create a chain of information from raw materials entering a plant to finished goods on the supermarket shelf.
Source: http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2004/03/28/food_tracking_opposed_by_industry_is_delayed/
17. *March 27, Press Herald (Maine)* — **Bigger chain to buy Shaw's. Albertsons, one of the world's largest grocery chains, has agreed to buy Shaw's, Maine's second-largest supermarket chain.** The stock deal, which includes Star Markets, is worth \$2.475 billion. Albertsons Inc., based in Boise, ID, has annual revenues of more than \$35 billion and employs about 200,000 workers at more than 2,300 stores in 31 states. Currently the 11th largest supermarket company in the U.S. with 202 stores and more than 30,000 workers, Shaw's is a wholly owned subsidiary of J. Sainsbury plc, a British company. Shaw's had revenues of about \$4.6 billion in 2003. **The merger is significant in the industry because it would give one of the nation's largest supermarket chains a foothold in New England.** If the Albertsons-Shaw's deal is approved by government regulators, it would be the largest merger in the supermarket industry in nearly four years, according to Supermarket News.
Source: <http://www.pressherald.com/news/state/040327shaws.shtml>

[[Return to top](#)]

Water Sector

18. *March 29, Roanoke Times (Virginia)* — **Tests find widespread water pollution. More than half of the rivers and streams monitored in Virginia are polluted, and about 75 percent of all coastal estuaries fail clean-water tests, according to a state study.** Since the first report was released in 1994, the number of waterways impaired by at least one pollutant has grown in tandem with the amount of sampling done, five percent were found to be tainted in 1996, 13 percent in 1998, 41 percent in 2000, 44 percent in 2002, and 52 percent in 2003. State officials cautioned against concluding that Virginia's waters are getting worse. Instead, they said inspectors are looking more closely for problems and that environmental standards continue to toughen. "The bottom line is, we're holding pretty steady," said Alan Pollock, chief of water programs for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, the agency that compiled the report.

Source: <http://www.roanoke.com/roatimes/news/story164869.html>

19. *March 28, Washington Post* — **EPA requests lead data. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is asking state governments to describe how they are protecting children from excessive lead in drinking water, citing recent problems at schools and day-care centers in Washington, DC, and elsewhere.** In a letter, the EPA notes a growing number of reports of schools in which testing has turned up lead-contaminated drinking water. Last year, elevated levels were found in public schools in Baltimore, MD, and Syracuse, NY. In January, Seattle schools turned off their taps and began supplying students with bottled water until lead problems are fixed. **The letter, signed by Benjamin H. Grumbles, the agency's acting administrator for water, is part of a broader agency review of its lead rules.** Concern over lead is flaring up again a decade after many schools shut off lead-lined drinking fountains because EPA tests required at the time found widespread contamination. But some water quality experts now say that the focus on drinking fountains neglected other major sources of lead contamination, such as solder and plumbing fixtures that can leach lead even if water is not corrosive. There are no federal requirements for testing drinking water in schools.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A29927-2004Mar 27.html>

[[Return to top](#)]

Public Health Sector

20. *March 29, New York Times* — **U.S. ill-prepared for bioterrorism. Two years after a report on the 2001 anthrax attacks in the U.S. was completed, the Pentagon has released parts of an unclassified document that concluded that the country is woefully ill-prepared to detect and respond to a bioterrorist assault. In a sweeping assessment, the report identified weaknesses in "almost every aspect of U.S. biopreparedness and response."** The report was based largely on discussions among some 40 government and private experts on public health, national security and law enforcement who attended a meeting the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a research center that conducts nonsecret research for the government and other clients, sponsored in December 2001. The report was written by David Heyman, director of the center's homeland security program. Completed in April 2002, it documented many weaknesses in the response by the U.S. to the October 2001 anthrax letter

attacks that killed five of the 18 people infected with the spores and put more than 30,000 people on antibiotics. The study also makes recommendations about how best to prevent, detect, and respond to such attacks. Many of the recommendations have been or are being adopted by the Bush administration.

Source: <http://www.iht.com/articles/512362.htm>

21. *March 29, University of Wisconsin–Madison* — **Mimicking viruses may provide new way to defeat them. According to new research, from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, the introduction of a harmless molecule that uses the same machinery a virus needs to grow may be a potent way to shut down the virus before it infects other cells or becomes resistant to drugs.** The current technique to stop a virus in its tracks is to develop drugs that bind to and block the function of virus proteins, molecules the virus produces, with the aid of host cells that help the virus replicate, or make copies of itself. **While improvements in molecular biology and chemistry have led to new drugs that precisely target virus proteins, they have not been able to stop viruses from producing drug-resistant strains.** Rather than designing a drug molecule that inhibits virus proteins, the UW–Madison researchers created a molecule that acts just like the parasitic virus: It enters the cell and hijacks the very machinery the virus requires for its own growth. But unlike the virus, the diversionary molecules are much smaller, meaning they can grow a lot faster and steal away even more resources from the virus. Plus, they don't encode any virus proteins, which renders them powerless inside a cell.

Source: http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2004-03/uow-smv032504.php

22. *March 29, CTV News* — **Avian flu spreads to B.C. health worker. A contract worker with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency is believed to be the first human in Canada to develop avian flu.** Health officials in British Columbia said the employee was inspecting a poultry farm in the Fraser Valley. "There was a failure in protection measures," said Dr. Andrew Larder of the Fraser Valley Health Authority. "He came in very close contact with a bird and that seems to have resulted in the person being infected." However, it is not the same strain that has led to 24 deaths in Asia. Instead, it was the milder H7 strain. **About 10 workers have shown flu-like symptoms, with only one actually developing bird flu.** One other individual is being closely watched.

Source: http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1080394304767_21/?hub=CTVNewsAt11

23. *March 28, Chicago Tribune* — **Assembly-line tactic speeds research.** A germ's ability to attack human cells usually boils down to the shapes of the molecules that make up the germ. Molecular pieces fit together with pieces of other molecules to cause disease. As scientists understand how molecular pieces fit together, they can design molecules with similar shapes to disrupt the disease process. The trick is getting a clear picture of the appropriate shapes. **Working with traditional lab techniques, it can take months or even years to get useful information for just one pathogen's molecular structure. To cut that time, researchers at Argonne National Laboratory are developing an assembly-line approach to the problem.** The new \$30 billion biocontainment lab the University of Chicago is building on Argonne's campus will give scientists a safe place to study the effects of agents designed to stymie a germ's ability to cause disease. "We'll be able to put experimental agents into rodents at this lab, which is something we can't do now," said Harvey Drucker, Argonne's associate director. By

using genetic information about humans and about pathogens, scientists can use Argonne's infrastructure to look for protein molecules that are unique to a germ and don't exist in humans. Agents designed to interfere with those molecules should lead to drugs that prevent or cure disease without causing side effects in people, Drucker said.

Source: http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/chi-0403280224mar28.1_2492357.story?coll=chi-business-hed

24. *March 28, Medical News Today* — **Vaccination week in the Americas targets 40 million people. Health workers in every country in the Western Hemisphere will target millions of children, many in isolated areas, during a Vaccination Week in the Americas, starting April 24.** Coordinated by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the weeklong events will focus on the children normally left behind, those living in rural border regions, and the most vulnerable groups, including women and the elderly. While most of the countries will vaccinate against measles, polio, rubella, and congenital rubella syndrome, others will seek to prevent influenza and neonatal tetanus. **According to preliminary plans, the countries of South and Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean will vaccinate some 40 million people, mostly children. The United States and Canada will participate by promoting the benefits of immunization, especially among children.**

Source: <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/index.php?newsid=6870>

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

Government Sector

Nothing to report.

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

Emergency Services Sector

25. *March 29, CNET News* — **Law enforcement missing out on IP benefits.** Those gathered in Santa Clara, CA, for the Spring 2004 Voice on the Net Conference & Expo this week warn that the nation's 2,300 emergency call centers are missing out on a technological breakthrough touted as on par with the invention of police car radios. **By upgrading to IP equipment, 911 calls could be accompanied by much more information, such as callers' medical records or maps of the inside of their homes. But tight state budgets and technological inertia will delay, likely for years, upgrades that 911 call centers need to make to the century-old radio technology they now use,** industry executives and officials say. Police in only a small number of cities are now able to determine the location of someone calling 911 via a cell phone, even though the U.S. cell phone industry made the necessary technology available in 100 markets last year.

Source: http://news.com.com/2100-7352_3-5181099.html?tag=nefd_top

26. *March 29, Christian Science Monitor* — **Homeland security at the grass-roots level.** Residents at a forum at Fenway Park in Boston, MA, last week raised concerns about what homeland security means for them. Last week's meeting was the fifth in a six-city national tour including St. Louis, Miami, San Diego, Houston, and Seattle. It brought together Governor Mitt

Romney, Mayor Thomas Menino, Boston Police Commissioner Kathleen O'Toole, and local officials, firefighters, police officers, and other first responders. This step toward community cohesiveness is a part of the national Homeland Security from the Citizens' Perspective initiative. The Council for Excellence in Government has launched a Website, www.citizensecure.org, that it hopes will become a nationwide forum to respond to citizens' concerns and offer recommendations to local and statewide officials when preparing for or responding to emergencies. To help with efforts in Boston, and in time for the national convention this summer, **Mayor Menino appointed Carlo Boccia to run security in the city and coordinate efforts with surrounding towns. Boston is one of four of the nation's largest cities—including Detroit, San Diego, and Houston—that has created a local high-ranking homeland security post.**

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0329/p03s01-usgn.html>

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

Information and Telecommunications Sector

27. *March 29, New Scientist* — **Flash mob to attempt supercomputing feat.** An attempt to transform a motley collection of laptops into the first ad-hoc supercomputer is scheduled for April 3 at the University of San Francisco. Over 1000 laptop owners will gather in the university gym in an attempt to build a "flash mob" supercomputer. The project's organizers hope that FlashMob will run fast enough to beat supercomputers in the list of the world's top 500 supercomputers. One of the challenges facing John Witchel, the USF graduate student running the project, and his colleagues, is that "You essentially don't know anything about the computers until they show they up that day." The team therefore had to write code that not only allows the computers to share lots of data quickly, but also determines each processor's speed and memory as it goes. This allows the computational tasks to be allocated in the most efficient way possible. **To beat the slowest computer in the top 500, FlashMob will have to perform a rigorous mathematical calculation called Linpack at a rate of at least 403 billion flops (floating point operations per second).**

Source: <http://www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99994826>

28. *March 29, CNET News.com* — **Extra headaches of securing XML.** Extensible Markup Language and XML-based protocols are rapidly becoming a common way for businesses to format and exchange corporate information. Businesses typically have used Web services to connect internal applications and share information with a well-known network of business partners. However, once companies start using Web services and XML more extensively, they need to reconsider how they are exposing their data—and to what, Gartner analyst Benoit Lheureux said. **Infiltrating a corporate network by tapping into Web services interfaces is potentially more damaging than simply knocking out a Website, because business-to-business applications expose valuable corporate information,** he noted. Typical security products are designed to keep unwanted intruders from entering corporate networks or to prevent attacks that can disable a machine. Applications that send information via XML documents use the same Internet network protocols that traditional security products monitor. But **because XML messages are wrapped in the IP "envelope" that most firewalls are designed to track, corporate networks inspect the envelope but not the contents. Fraudulent XML messages could therefore enter corporate networks undetected.**

Internet Alert Dashboard

Current Alert Levels	
 <p>AlertCon: 1 out of 4 https://gtoc.iss.net</p>	 <p>Security Focus ThreatCon: 2 out of 4 http://analyzer.securityfocus.com/</p>
Current Virus and Port Attacks	
Virus:	#1 Virus in the United States: WORM_NETSKY.P 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	445 (microsoft-ds), 80 (www), 135 (epmap), 3127 (mydoom), 1026 (nterm), 137 (netbios-ns), 1434 (ms-sql-m), 6129 (dameware), 2745 (urbisnet), 4899 (radmin) Source: http://isc.incidents.org/top10.html ; Internet Storm Center

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

General Sector

29. *March 29, CNN* — **Uzbekistan blasts kill 19. Multiple explosions and attacks on police in Uzbekistan have left at least 19 people dead and are being blamed on terrorists, senior Uzbek officials say.** Prosecutor-general Rashid Kadyrov said events began late Sunday, March 28, with a blast that killed 10 people at a house being used by an extremist in the central province of Bukhara. Six policemen and a child were killed in suicide bombings and attempted suicide attacks in the capital Tashkent on Sunday night and Monday, Kadyrov said. **The suicide bombings are the first ever in Uzbekistan and have been blamed on Islamic extremists, he added.** "A preliminary investigation shows all the events are interconnected and aimed at the destabilization of the country," Kadyrov said. The U.S. Embassy has suspended visa operations and called on Americans in the region "to be on the highest alert" and "avoid large crowds and public places." Uzbek Foreign Minister Sadyk Safayev said the attacks were aimed at breaking the U.S.-led anti-terror coalition.

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/asiapcf/03/29/uzbek.blast/>

30. *March 28, Reuters* — **Foreign investors in U.S. commercial real estate. Foreign investors are pouring money into the U.S. commercial real estate market, even though returns are down from historic levels, amid a flood of competing capital from U.S. insurers, pension and equity funds.** While returns have dropped, commercial real estate still offers more generous returns than stocks and bonds. Also, the U.S. dollar's depreciation, especially against European currencies, has enticed overseas investors, lenders and developers said at an industry conference. **In addition to real estate, overseas money has played an increasing role in U.S.**

financial markets. Asian central banks, especially the Bank of Japan, have been snapping up U.S. Treasuries and agency securities to stem the export-damaging rise of their currencies against the dollar. In Europe, Germany has become the premier source of foreign funds for U.S. commercial real estate, followed by the Netherlands and Switzerland, said David Houston, president of Colliers Houston & Co., a commercial real estate services company. With the euro's dramatic rise against the dollar, Europeans also see U.S. real estate as a currency hedge, said Houston.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31005-2004Mar 28.html>

[[Return to top](#)]

DHS/IAIP Products & Contact Information

The Department of Homeland Security's Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection (IAIP) serves as a national critical infrastructure threat assessment, warning, vulnerability entity. The IAIP provides a range of bulletins and advisories of interest to information system security and professionals and those involved in protecting public and private infrastructures. By visiting the IAIP web-site (<http://www.nipc.gov>), one can quickly access any of the following DHS/IAIP products:

[DHS/IAIP Warnings](#) – DHS/IAIP Assessments, Advisories, and Alerts: DHS/IAIP produces three levels of infrastructure warnings. Collectively, these threat warning products will be based on material that is significant, credible, timely, and that address cyber and/or infrastructure dimensions with possibly significant impact.

[DHS/IAIP Publications](#) – DHS/IAIP Daily Reports, CyberNotes, Information Bulletins, and other publications

[DHS/IAIP Daily Reports Archive](#) – Access past DHS/IAIP Daily Open Source Infrastructure Reports

DHS/IAIP Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Contact Information

Content and Suggestions: nipcdailyadmin@mail.nipc.osis.gov or contact the DHS/IAIP Daily Report Team at (703) 883-3644

Subscription and Distribution Information Send mail to nipcdailyadmin@mail.nipc.osis.gov or contact the DHS/IAIP Daily Report Team at (703) 883-3644 for more information.

Contact DHS/IAIP

To report physical infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact the National Infrastructure Coordinating Center at nicc@dhs.gov or (202) 282-9201.

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at info@us-cert.gov or visit their Web page at www.uscert.gov.

DHS/IAIP Disclaimer

The DHS/IAIP Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report is a daily [Monday through Friday] summary and assessment of open-source published information concerning significant critical infrastructure issues. This is an internal DHS/IAIP tool intended to serve the informational needs of DHS/IAIP personnel and other interested staff. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions of the content. The IAIP provides no warranty of ownership of the copyright, or of accuracy in respect of the original source material.

