



ROLL CALL RELEASE

In Collaboration with the ITACG



24 June 2010

(U//FOUO) Attacks on Drinking Water Systems

(U//FOUO) Drinking water systems, especially treatment, distribution, and chemical storage facilities, may be targets for physical destruction, intentional contamination (possibly with chemical, biological or radiological materials), or cyber attack because the infrastructure is highly visible, less hardened, and more accessible than some other critical infrastructure. Terrorists have shown interest in biological agents that could be used for water contamination and, prior to 2003, planned surveillance of U.S. dams, reservoirs, and water supply systems to assess their potential as targets. Even a small-scale or thwarted attack could disrupt or deny service to businesses, households, and emergency responders or inspire public fear.

(U//FOUO) **Potential water sector targets** are source water, reservoirs, wells, intakes, distribution systems, pump stations, service lines, fire hydrants, finished water tanks, treatment facilities, equipment and chemical storage units, and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems.

(U//FOUO) **Indicators of possible contamination:**

- (U//FOUO) A change in water quality and/or physical parameters (odor, taste, color, chemical change, bacterial counts, Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), etc...).
- (U//FOUO) Increased consumer complaints of discoloration, unusual taste, or objectionable odor; burning of the esophagus; and respiratory symptoms.
- (U//FOUO) An increase in gastrointestinal symptoms/illnesses at emergency medical care facilities.
- (U//FOUO) An unexplained drop or change in water pressure.
- (U//FOUO) Signs of forced entry at potential targets/routes of entry, triggering of security alarms, or evidence of tampering.

(U//FOUO) **Possible Indicators of action against drinking water systems:**

- (U//FOUO) Theft of water utility computers or other sensitive information.
- (U//FOUO) Theft of radio devices that could be used to jam utility communications or disrupt systems.
- (U//FOUO) Suspicious inquiries regarding anticontamination protocols.
- (U//FOUO) Persons impersonating water sector inspectors or officials, such as from the EPA.
- (U//FOUO) Unauthorized intrusion into water utility Web sites or online SCADA systems.
- (U//FOUO) Utility employees being followed or photographed while working, or suspicious photography or videotaping at or around water plants.
- (U//FOUO) Stolen, cloned, or missing water utility vehicles or uniforms.

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(U) Prepared by the DHS/I&A Homeland Counterterrorism Division, the FBI/Directorate of Intelligence, and the Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group. This product is intended to assist federal, state, local, and private sector first responders in developing deterrence, prevention, preemption, or response strategies. Coordinated with the DHS/I&A Cyber, Infrastructure and Science Division and the EPA.

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