

BUSINESSSAFE

BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.

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BusinessSafe Highlight: Water and Wastewater Sector

Criminal Activity

The water and wastewater sector is composed of various public drinking water systems and wastewater treatment facilities. This sector is essential to ensuring public health and proper environmental protection. Situations that risk the safe operation of drinking water or wastewater systems could result in large numbers of illnesses, casualties, and interruptions of service.

1. **Physical Attacks** – Physical attacks have the potential to cause serious public health challenges. Physical damage to water facility components including reservoirs, tunnels, distribution and monitoring systems, and other vital components, rarely result in catastrophic conditions but may cause temporary disturbances in the availability of water services.

[Vandal rams buildings with front loader, causing extensive damage at Pierce County water treatment plant](#)

2. **Cyberattacks** – Many water facilities operate using automated control systems. These systems operate via computer networks and are used to manage the water testing, treatment, and movement processes. These networks and systems may be vulnerable to cyberattacks if not properly secured. A cyberattack on a water facility could impact the facility's ability to provide safe water for consumers.

[Hit by Ransomware Attack, Florida City Agrees to Pay Hackers \\$600,000](#)
[Two more cyber-attacks hit Israel's water system](#)

Other Threats and Hazards

The water and wastewater sectors are also vulnerable to natural disasters and hazards including hurricanes, tornadoes, climate change, drought, and aging infrastructure. These threats and hazards may lead to disruptions in the availability of clean water to communities.

1. **Natural Threats** – Severe weather occurrences like hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods, can pose a serious and continuing risk for the sector. These events may result in critical water shortages, and in some instances, can lead to water use restrictions and rationing.
[Here's How a Florida Treatment Plant Team Deals With Hurricanes and Other Storm Events](#)



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- 2. Hazardous Materials** – Safe drinking water is essential to a healthy population and environment. Drinking water and sites with hazardous materials that could impact drinking water are routinely monitored and treated to prevent the distribution of harmful contaminants in the water supply.

[Broward Site Makes EPA 'Immediate Attention' Superfund List](#)

Resources

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) provides multiple resources relating to the water and wastewater sector.

[Water and Wastewater Systems Sector](#)

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides a variety of tools and resources to support drinking water and wastewater utility preparedness and response.

[Emergency Response for Drinking Water and Wastewater Utilities](#)

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has also provided information addressing concerns over drinking water and COVID-19.

[Coronavirus and Drinking Water and Wastewater](#)

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