

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101-3265

**Recognition of National Cybersecurity
Awareness Month**

Public Meeting: October 17, 2013

STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER PAMELA A. WITMER

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) is pleased to publicly recognize that October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The Commission joins the Governor's Office of Homeland Security in reminding Pennsylvania consumers and utilities to raise awareness and implement best practices to protect our utilities' critical infrastructure and our citizens' private information. This year marks the 10th anniversary of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month sponsored by the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Pennsylvania, as well as the Commission, recognizes that robust cybersecurity plans are key to protecting citizens' personal data, but they are also critically important because of the potential impact that cyber threats pose to our economy. Utilities are responsible for facilities that drive every corner of our economy – steel mills, agriculture, chemical facilities, banking, hospitals, and aviation. Cyber attacks are estimated to cost businesses over \$100 billion annually. In fact, electric utilities alone will spend \$14 billion over the next six years on smart grid cybersecurity measures.

The need to protect our state's critical infrastructure is crucial because cyber threats have escalated exponentially. DHS reports that, from 2010 through 2011, attempted and successful cyber attacks against critical infrastructure such as the electric grid, dams and water systems rose more than 383% nationally. It is estimated that there are over 500 million devices connected to the internet in the United States, each of which poses a threat to our infrastructure if not properly used and protected. The security of utility systems is imperative, from the telecommunications networks and natural gas pipelines beneath us to water and wastewater plants, to the electric grid that keeps our lights on.

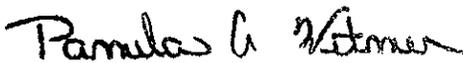
Accordingly, federal and state agencies, utilities, and associations have stepped up to the challenge of defending critical infrastructure against cyber attacks. The responsibility of prevention, protection, detection and responding to cyber attacks is multi-pronged and must be shared by all of us. Specifically, the Commission has taken this responsibility head on in several areas:

- Our current regulatory approach is an all hazards one which includes physical, emergency response, continuity of business operations and cyber. Our focus continues to be assessing the capabilities of the Commission and our jurisdictional utilities, and, most importantly, breaking down silos among all the parties involved in this issue to promote better communication and information sharing.

- We have taken steps to have our jurisdictional utilities voluntarily establish a cyber point person for staff and other utilities to contact if a cyber threat is detected so that we can quickly identify threats and other potential cybersecurity issues.
- Recognizing that utility cybersecurity issues extend beyond our state's borders, we have been proactively working with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), as well as our neighboring state utility commissions of New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia on several cyber initiatives including the initiation of quarterly multi-state meetings to share critical information about this issue.
- We are also working with state partners like the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency as well as federal counterparts including DHS, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure that our state's critical infrastructure is identified and best practices are in place to defend against continuous cyber threats.

We all have a role to play in defending our nation's infrastructure and economy from cyber attacks. There are many tools that we all can access to secure our personal devices that will protect our personal information as well as protect the work systems to which we interconnect. I urge you to pay particular attention to and become more aware of the cyber threats that continue to increase and to use good security practices to safeguard key information. I also request the regulated community and their partners to continue their commendable efforts to break down silos with each other and the Commission in order to protect Pennsylvania's critical infrastructure, its economy and its citizens.

DATE: October 17, 2013



PAMELA A. WITMER
COMMISSIONER