



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
COMMONWEALTH KEYSTONE BUILDING
400 NORTH STREET
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

July 9, 2024

To All Jurisdictional Pennsylvania Water and Wastewater Utilities:

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) has received credible cybersecurity threat intelligence from the National Security Council (NSC), Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that Pennsylvania's water and wastewater utilities are being targeted by nation-state and criminal threat actors. These agencies have informed the PUC that these threat actors are targeting the water and wastewater sector with the goal of infiltrating utility critical infrastructure to compromise it for financial or military purposes.

Because these threats are growing exponentially, these federal agencies are strongly urging water and wastewater utilities to bolster their cybersecurity efforts and adopt the Cybersecurity Industry Best Practices (CIBPs) to help mitigate the risks posed by the nation-state and criminal threat actors. The PUC similarly recommends that water and wastewater utilities prepare an action plan that outlines methods to discover and mitigate significant cybersecurity vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure. The goal for these action plans is to identify, remediate, or mitigate high-risk cybersecurity vulnerabilities and to document any others that could pose a threat to critical infrastructure.

The PUC strongly recommends that water and wastewater utilities utilize free resources provided by the EPA. The EPA conducts cybersecurity assessments for utilities through the Cybersecurity Evaluation Program where utilities work virtually with a cybersecurity professional to complete a self-assessment using the EPA's Water Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (WCAT). Following the assessment, utilities receive a comprehensive Assessment Report and Risk Mitigation Plan Template to address cybersecurity gaps and track progress on improvements to cybersecurity programs. More information about this assessment and other services offered by the EPA can be seen on the EPA's [Cybersecurity for the Water Sector](#) website and their [Cybersecurity Fact Sheet](#).

In addition to the EPA resources, the PUC recommends that smaller utilities with a limited cybersecurity footprint utilize the American Water Works Association (AWWA) [Cybersecurity Management Tool](#). The AWWA Water Sector Cybersecurity Risk Management Tool is designed to support utilities in developing their cybersecurity risk management strategy while also facilitating compliance with the cybersecurity provisions in §2013 of America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) of 2018. The risk and resilience assessment considers malevolent and natural hazards that may impact water and wastewater critical assets.

In addition to the EPA's and AWWA's resources and assessments, CISA offers free guidance, tools, training, resources, and technical assistance. CISA can help water and wastewater utilities conduct cybersecurity risk assessments, develop risk mitigation plans, and provide near real-time technical

assistance with implementing cybersecurity controls. More information about these programs is available on CISA's [Water and Wastewater Cybersecurity](#) website.

Finally, PUC staff will hold meetings with jurisdictional water and wastewater utilities to discuss the risks posed by threat actors and to determine how the PUC can address any barriers utilities face accessing and utilizing these tools. These meetings will be in person and online via Microsoft Teams. The PUC will also be partnering with CISA to help the utilities develop their vulnerability and risk management programs. These meetings will be coordinated through the Office of Cybersecurity Compliance and Oversight and will start in October 2024.

Respectfully,

Michael Holko, Director, Office of Cybersecurity Compliance and Oversight
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
400 North Street, 3rd Floor North
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-425-5327 | miholko@pa.gov
www.puc.pa.gov | Consumer Hotline 1-800-692-7380



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