



RISK MANAGEMENT **ALERT**



R I S K M A N A G E M E N T A D V I S O R Y

Utica National Insurance Loss Control Department Bulletin

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TOPIC: U.S. Department of Homeland Security Improves America's Cyber Security Preparedness —Unveils National Cyber Alert System

SCOPE: WASHINGTON, D.C.—The National Cyber Security Division (NCS) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) unveiled the National Cyber Alert System, an operational system delivering to Americans timely and actionable information to better secure their computer systems.

BACKGROUND: As part of this program, Homeland Security is making available a series of information products targeted for home users and technical experts in businesses and government agencies. These e-mail products will provide timely information on computer security vulnerabilities, potential impact, and action required to mitigate threats, as well as PC security “best practices” and “how to” guidance.

“The President’s National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace provides a framework for the public and private sectors to work together to secure cyberspace,” said Frank Libutti, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection. “The National Cyber Security Division’s mission is to serve as a focal point for implementing the National Strategy and protecting the American People. The development and initial operating capability of the National Cyber Alert System elevates awareness and helps improve America’s IT security posture,” said Amit Yoran, director of the National Cyber Security Division. “We are focused on making the threats and recommended actions easier for all computer users to understand, prioritize, and act upon. We recognize the importance and urgency of our mission and are taking action.”

HOMELAND SECURITY NATIONAL CYBER ALERT SYSTEM: This new National Cyber Alert System is America’s first coordinated national cyber security system for identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing emerging vulnerabilities and threats. Managed by the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT), a partnership between NCS and the private sector, the National Cyber Alert System provides the first infrastructure for relaying graded computer security update and warning information to all users.

The system evolves previous framework models such as CERT/CC Advisories and other similar efforts in the private sector. It provides actionable information to empower all citizens (from computer security professionals to home computer users with basic skills) to better secure their portion of cyberspace. The National Cyber Alert System provides credible and timely information on cyber security issues and allows DHS to provide both technical and easy to understand information on a timely basis.

WHAT IS OFFERED? HOW DO USERS SUBSCRIBE?

The new National Cyber Alert System security suite of products includes:

- Cyber Security Tips: Targeted at non-technical home and corporate computer users, the bi-weekly “Tips” provides information on best computer security practices and “how-to” information. How to access: **Sign up at www.us-cert.gov.**

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(Continued from page 1)

- **Cyber Security Bulletins:** Targeted at technical audiences, Bulletins provide bi-weekly summaries of security issues, new vulnerabilities, potential impact, patches and work-arounds, as well as actions required to mitigate risk. How to access: **Sign up at www.us-cert.gov.**
- **Cyber Security Alerts:** Available in two forms—regular for non-technical users and advanced for technical users—Cyber Security Alerts provide real-time information about security issues, vulnerabilities, and exploits currently occurring. Alerts encourage all users to take rapid action. How to access: **Sign up at www.us-cert.gov**

All information products are available on a free subscription basis and are delivered via push e-mail. Home users can also access Cyber Security Tips and Cyber Security Alerts from US-CERT affiliates including StaySafe Online (www.staysafeonline.info).

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY DIVISION: The National Cyber Security Division (NCSA) is part of Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection in the Department of Homeland Security. NCSA is charged with coordinating the implementation of the National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace and serves as the single National point of contact for the public and private sector regarding cyber security issues. NCSA is also charged with identifying, analyzing, and reducing cyber threats and vulnerabilities; disseminating threat warning information; coordinating incident response; and providing technical assistance in continuity of operations and recovery planning. NCSA's US-CERT serves as a focal point —bridging public and private sector institutions—to advance computer security preparedness and response.

For more information visit www.us-cert.gov.