

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Acting Commissioner



Ned Lamont
Governor
Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

Environmental Health & Drinking Water Branch

EHDWB Circular Letter: 2021-43

TO: Public Water Systems
Certified Operators

FROM: Lori Mathieu, Public Health Branch Chief, EHDW

Handwritten signature of Lori J. Mathieu '21 in blue ink.

DATE: June 28, 2021

SUBJECT: Free Cybersecurity Assessment and Technical Assistance

Cybersecurity is a broad term that refers to the security of computer network infrastructure and data. A cyber attack is an attempt to undermine or compromise the function of a computer network or system, or an attempt to track the online movements of individuals without their permission.

What is the assessment and technical assistance?

With the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Horsley Witten Group (HWG) is offering free, confidential, cybersecurity assessments and technical assistance to interested water and wastewater utilities. The assessment consists of a questionnaire completed with HWG staff, and the technical assistance consists of developing a cyber action plan based on the results of your utility's assessment focused on best practices to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident. Adoption of these practices can reduce the likelihood that a cyber attack will be successful and allow the utility to recover from any cyber attacks faster and at a lower cost. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HWG is offering this assessment and technical assistance virtually.

What are the expected outcomes?

All individual utility information gathered during the assessment will be protected and remain confidential. Trends in the anonymized, aggregated data will be shared with other utilities and agencies so that lessons learned from the assessments may benefit all. Participating utilities can expect to receive a straightforward overview of their vulnerabilities and suggested best practices to reduce risks to their business enterprise, SCADA, and communications systems. Additionally, the utility will develop their cyber action plan with HWG and work to implement any recommended best practices.



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What does the utility need to prepare before the assessment and technical assistance?

The assessment will require input from management, IT, operations/control staff and engineers as appropriate. The utility will also need to compile and provide any existing system documentation/diagrams, policies, and procedures.

Is there any follow-up?

Yes, HWG will contact the utility on two separate occasions after the development of the cyber action plan to gauge progress and see if additional assistance is required.

How does my utility participate?

To date, we have worked with over 100 utilities across the United States providing free cybersecurity technical assistance. EPA plans to expand the program as resources allow. We are continuing to register interested utilities at the link below.

To register your utility, please visit:
www.horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities

If you would like more information about the program, contact **Gemma Kite** at gkite@horsleywitten.com, or (508) 833-6600.


In addition, the Department of Public Health (DPH) Drinking Water Section (DWS) reminds water utilities to remain vigilant and evaluate system security.

“See Something, Say Something”

**Department of Public Health
Drinking Water Section**



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