

**The Washington Post Reports Russia Hacked the Electrical Grid in Vermont - Electric Utility Clarifies:** On Friday, the *Post* claimed, "A code associated with the Russian hacking operation dubbed Grizzly Steppe by the Obama administration has been detected within the system of a Vermont utility, according to U.S. officials ([WashPost](#))." However, the claim was subsequently qualified by the Burlington Electric Department which said, "Last night, U.S. utilities were alerted by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) of a malware code used in Grizzly Steppe, the name DHS has applied to a Russian campaign linked to recent hacks. We acted quickly to scan all computers in our system for the malware signature. We detected the malware in a single Burlington Electric Department laptop not connected to our organization's grid systems." Vermont Public Service Commissioner Christopher Recchia told The Burlington Free Press, "The grid is not in danger ([more](#))."

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security's December 29 Warning on Russian Hacking ([DHS](#)).**

**Cyber Attacks and Water Utilities:** In 2014, the federal Industrial Control Systems Cyber Emergency Response Team (ICS-CERT) released its "Monitor" report ([link](#)) that featured a cyber incident at a water utility that possibly caused an overflow of the system's wastewater treatment process. A 2014 ICS-CERT report ([link](#)) characterizes possible impacts and consequences of cyber-based penetrations in water systems (excess dose of chlorine, no chlorine, damage pumps, bypass in the treatment process, change real-time data within a SCADA system, or loss of the SCADA). ICS-CERT details seven strategies that can be implemented to counter common exploitable weaknesses in "as-built" control systems ([Seven Steps to Effectively Defend Industrial Control Systems](#)). ICS-CERT's 2015 Year in Review report found 295 incidents involving critical infrastructure reported in the U.S. with 25 reported in the water sector ([report](#)). In 2014, Iowa Rural Water Association reported that one of its member rural water systems was the victim of a cyber breach of its SCADA system. The attack was discovered by ICS-CERT, which subsequently visited Iowa and conducted an on-site assessment for the system free of charge.

**More Media Scrutiny of Drinking Water Privatization:** Last week, NPR featured water problems in Idaho's Syringa Mobile Home Park: "Since the 1980s, this community of roughly 100 houses has been plagued repeatedly by drinking water problems — including periods with contaminated water or no water at all. Rivers of raw sewage have occasionally gushed out of the ground and formed stinky ponds around

homes..." A consumer advocate said, "*The heart of the problem with manufactured home communities is that the residents don't own or control the land beneath their homes* ([NPR](#))." The following day, NPR featured a success story in Park Plaza, a community in Fridley, MN. NPR found that "*When Residents Take Ownership, A Mobile Home Community Thrives...*" Before taking over ownership, "*the water pipes were so old they would rupture a few times a year, and everybody would go without water — sometimes for days* ([NPR](#))."

### **Section 1926(b) Ensures Fair Resolution in Iowa Service Area**

**Dispute:** City of Dubuque purchases rural water system service area for \$6.1 million ([news video](#)). Territorial (or service area) protection from unfair annexation, condemnation or competition is a priority advocacy issue for NRWA ([more](#)).

**Federal Agencies Rush to Hire More Employees Before Trump** ([WashPost](#)).

**Federal Agencies Rush to Finalize More Regulations Before New Administration** ([news](#)).

**EPA Helps Flint Receive \$100 Million in SRF Grants** ([news](#)).

**Michigan Sewer Collapse Causes Massive Sinkhole, Affecting Two Dozen Homes** ([news](#)).

**EPA Launches Clean Water Act Jurisdictional Determination Website to Show the Types of Waters Regulated by EPA** ([EPA](#)).

**EPA Proposes Rule to Establish Public Notification Requirements for the 182 Combined Sewer Overflows in the Great Lakes** ([EPA](#)).

**EPA Develops Water Efficiency Best Practices for Water Suppliers** ([EPA](#)).

**EPA Finalizes Clean Water Act (CWA) Pretreatment Requirements for Dental Offices** ([EPA](#)). **North Dakota \$1 Billion Water Project to Serve 35 Municipal and Rural Water Systems** ([news](#)).

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**National Rural Water Association**

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