



Public Service Commission of West Virginia

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PSC initiates cybersecurity investigations into water, sewer utilities; they must act in 60 days

CHARLESTON – The Public Service Commission of West Virginia issued orders Thursday opening general investigations into the security against computer attacks (cyberattacks) of water and sewer utilities across the state.

“Cyberattacks against water and sewer utilities are increasing throughout the United States,” the Commission said in its order. “Cyberattacks threaten the distribution of clean and safe drinking water to the public. In addition, cyberattacks can create significant costs to the public and the affected utilities.”

The order directed all water and sewer systems to obtain a cyber threat vulnerability assessment within 60 days. The order said several federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, will provide the assessments free of charge.

The utilities were directed to certify in a filing with the Commission when and who performed the assessment, but the Commission will not collect the results of the assessments nor any related documents.

“Once an assessment is complete, a water or sewer utility will be required to develop a plan to address cyber threats,” the Commission said. Each must also designate a specific employee to handle compliance.

“This is a seriously developing problem across the nation and the Public Service Commission wants to be in the forefront of helping assure the safety of data concerning utilities and their customers,” PSC Chairman Charlotte R. Lane said. “These attacks are widespread and will become more common, we fear, as we rely more and more on computers in our daily lives and in running our businesses.”

More information on this case can be found on the PSC website: www.psc.state.wv.us. Click on “Case Information” and access Case Nos. 24-0460-PWD-W-GI and 24-0461-PSD-S-GI.

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