JANET T. MILLS
GOVERNOR

MELANIE LOYZIM
COMMISSIONER

July 8, 2021

To: Water Sector Professionals
From: Brian Kavanah, Director, Bureau of Water Quality

Re: Cybersecurity Threats to Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Maine

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is reaching out to water sector professionals, POTWs, industrial dischargers, towns, municipalities, and districts to warn against cybersecurity attacks on key infrastructure. **Specifically, DEP has become aware of two recent ransomware attacks in Maine that have affected wastewater infrastructure.**

Unfortunately, this is real. It has happened in Maine and it is likely to happen again. It is imperative for facilities to take action to verify their systems are secure <u>before</u> becoming a victim of cyberattacks.

This memo offers:
 1) resources to help facilities secure their systems, and
 2) steps to take if you become the victim of a cyberattack.

There are many tools, training courses and services to help organizations assess their vulnerability. Many of these services are free of charge, or eligible for federal or state funding as discussed below.

<u>What are cyberattacks?</u>
Cyberattacks can take several forms – ransomware to extort money from an organization, disgruntled employee trying to cause harm, or threats from foreign or domestic extremist groups looking to disrupt America's infrastructure.

Cyberattacks on wastewater infrastructure can cause significant harm, such as interrupting treatment processes by accessing the system remotely to open and close valves, overriding alarms, disabling pumps or other equipment, or overriding SCADA systems. Customers' personal or credit card data can be stolen from the utility's billing system. Criminals often demand millions of dollars of ransom to unlock the data or restore functionality to the system.

<u>How do I prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident?</u>
The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop guidance and resources focused on Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector.

AUGUSTA   BANGOR   PORTLAND   PRESQUE ISLE
17 STATE HOUSE STATION   106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6   312 CANCO ROAD   1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017   BANGOR, MAINE 04401   PORTLAND, MAINE 04103   PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769
(207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826   (207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584   (207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303   (207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143

website: www.maine.gov/dep

The website, https://www.epa.gov/waterriskassessment/epa-cybersecurity-best-practices-water-sector, offers technical assistance, incident action checklists, training and response exercises, and many other valuable resources for the water/ wastewater sector.

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) has developed a Water Sector Cybersecurity Risk Management Guidance & Cybersecurity Tool which can be found at this link: https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Risk-Resilience/Cybersecurity-Guidance.

Is there funding to assist communities with cybersecurity?
Recent funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) provides funds to municipalities and counties that may be used for wastewater infrastructure, including cybersecurity. For more information see my letter of June 10, 2021 and visit: https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) can be used to develop effective cybersecurity practices and measures as well as fund equipment and technology upgrades for cybersecurity at publicly owned treatment works (POTWs). For more information visit https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf/supporting-cybersecurity-measures-clean-water-state-revolving-fund, or contact John True, john.n.true@maine.gov or Brandy Piers at brandy.m.piers@maine.gov.

EPA is offering free, confidential, onsite assessments and technical assistance to interested drinking water and wastewater utilities on how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident. The onsite assessment and assistance includes development of a cyber action plan to guide the implementation of best practices. To register for this service, go to https://horsleywitten.com/cybersecurityutilities/.

Is there cybersecurity training available?
New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), www.neiwpcc.org and Maine Rural Water Association (MRWA), https://www.mainerwa.org/ offer cybersecurity training for Maine operators. We will post additional trainings as they become available.

What should I do if I suspect a cyberattack at my facility?
If your organization does become the victim of a cyberattack, it is important to notify your county's Emergency Management Agency as soon as possible. A directory of county emergency agencies can be found at this link: https://www.maine.gov/mema/ema-community/county-local/county-emergency-management-agencies.

If you cannot get a hold of the county contact, call the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) at 207-624-4400 and speak to the Duty Officer.

As always, thank you for your good work to protect and improve the waters of the great State of Maine!