

BUSINESSSAFE

BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.

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BusinessSafe Sector Highlight: Dams Sector

The Dams Sector is comprised of retention and control services for many critical water functions such as hydroelectric power generation, municipal and industrial water supply, agricultural irrigation and river navigation for bulk shipping. Examples of this include levees, hurricane barriers, and navigation locks. Of the more than 90,000 dams in the U.S., approximately 65% are privately owned, and approximately 80% are regulated by state dam safety offices. The Dams Sector has interdependencies with the Water and Wastewater, Energy, Food and Agriculture and Transportation Sectors. Florida is home to nearly 1,000 state-regulated dams.

Criminal Activity and Targeted Violence

Criminal or terrorist actors may target the Dams Sector to cause mass harm, obtain proprietary information, or to disrupt other sectors. These attacks may be carried out through cyber or physical targeted attacks.

1. **Cyber** - Criminal and terrorist actors may seek to exploit this sector's reliance on technology to conduct attacks using network intrusion, phishing, denial of service, and ransomware. Additionally, some hackers with ties to nation states may seek to disrupt dam operations, cause harm to the facility or surrounding populations, or to obtain proprietary information. While facilities generally have cyber security measures to mitigate their vulnerabilities, cyber threats remain an ongoing concern.
[Justice Department charges 7 in Rye Brook dam cyberattack](#)
[Hackers undetected on Queensland water supplier server for 9 months](#)
2. **Targeted Attacks** - While there have been no significant attacks on dams in the U.S., an attack on the Dams Sector could result in environmental harm, property damage, loss of life, or impacts to other sectors. Of particular concern is the use of explosive devices, which could compromise the dam's structure or impair its operations. However, other attack methods, including firearms attacks, are also possible. Terrorist actors overseas have also been known to intentionally release water to cause damage or deplete the availability of water.
[Power plant 'terror' attack kills 2 in Russia in 2010](#)



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Other Threats or Hazards

Due to the location of dams and their assets, they are susceptible to unpredictable natural hazards and aging.

1. **Natural Hazards** – Natural hazards such as drought, flooding, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other disasters can cause damage to dams, disrupt operations, or cause system failures. Dams in the U.S. are designed and maintained to withstand a variety of natural hazards. Still, these hazards may have the potential to impact the dam.
[Lower water levels at Lake Mead mean less electricity from Hoover Dam](#)
[‘Catastrophic’ flooding underway as dam failures in Michigan force thousands to evacuate](#)
2. **Aging** – The average age of the majority of the dams in the U.S. is over 50 years old. Aging dam infrastructure can impede operations and result in costly and timely repairs and impacts to operations of other sectors.
[Study looks at impact of aging locks and dams along upper Mississippi](#)
[Aging dam above Douglas called ‘catastrophic’ threat](#)

Resources

- The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency offers [Dams Sector training](#) and resources for dam and levee stakeholders.
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection offers information for dam stakeholders through the [Florida dam safety program](#).
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency offers [dam safety](#) program and risk management information as well as [dam safety training](#).
- **“If You See Something, Say Something®”** – Report suspicious activity to your local law enforcement agency, on the FDLE website using [Florida’s See Something, Say Something Tool Kit](#), via the Florida See Say app, or by calling 855-FLA-Safe. In an emergency, call 911.



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