



City of Homer

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Memorandum 22-028

TO: Homer City Council
THROUGH: Robert Dumouchel, City Manager
FROM: David Berry, Library Director
DATE: January 21, 2022
SUBJECT: Cybersecurity for the City of Homer

The frequency and intensity of cyberattacks on government infrastructure has increased immensely in recent years. Attackers motivated by politics, greed or personal interests have held organizations and governments for ransom, stolen data, and inflicted damage on equipment and services.

In 2018, the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) created a set of guidelines for cybersecurity practices. Aimed mainly at municipalities and government entities, the *Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity* lists specific actions that organizations can take to make their systems more resistant to disruption and better at recovery after an attack. The recommendations fall into five general categories:

1. **Identify:** Inventory equipment, software, and personnel; understand partnerships with outside entities; recognize risks and mitigate them; train staff and update policies routinely.
2. **Protect:** Control access to systems; communicate roles and responsibilities to all parties; maintain sufficient capacity in staff and technology; compartmentalize systems; back up information regularly; plan for response and recovery.
3. **Detect:** Monitor systems for disruption or intrusion; communicate breaches to appropriate personnel.
4. **Respond:** Follow emergency plans; coordinate with key personnel; identify the impact; contain and mitigate the damage.
5. **Recover:** Update response plans with lessons learned; communicate lessons to relevant parties.

The City of Homer already implements many of the recommendations, but the process could be strengthened and improved.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution endorsing the NIST cybersecurity framework and supporting the city manager's efforts to put the recommended practices into effect.