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Reduce Your Exposure to Growing Cyber Threats

With cyber threats becoming more sophisticated, local governments and public entities face increased risk, especially from ransomware attacks. According to the FBI, government facilities rank as the [third most targeted](#) critical infrastructure sector for ransomware attacks.

Underinvestment in cybersecurity, reliance on [outdated software](#), and [lack of secure .gov domains](#) are all common vulnerabilities identified by information technology experts.

To reduce exposure to these growing risks, experts recommend:

- Moving toward a [“Zero Trust Architecture”](#) that continuously verifies each user and device accessing networks.
- Avoiding common pitfalls such as neglecting software updates or downloading apps from untrusted sources.
- Using strong passwords, enabling multifactor authentication, and promptly reporting phishing attempts to help guard against threats.
- Investing in modern cybersecurity tools and infrastructure.
- Updating legacy equipment to ensure it receives security patches.
- Storing critical data in the cloud to limit on-site vulnerabilities.
- Adopting a computer-aided dispatch and records management system to help isolate public safety department records from other municipal data.
- Recognizing that every individual plays a part in keeping data secure.
- Participating in table top exercises to test your response plan.

By adopting these cybersecurity practices and implementing preventive measures, municipalities can significantly reduce the likelihood of costly cyber incidents. Taking steps to protect sensitive information now can help prevent identity theft, financial loss, and cyber threats that could result in long-term impacts to employees, municipalities, the public and critical infrastructure.

As a reminder, MIIA members can apply for annual [risk management grants](#) that support cybersecurity investments, as well as other loss control initiatives. Visit emiia.org for additional cyber resources.



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