

## Homeland Security chief: Banks 'under attack' by hackers | Security & Privacy

**A**t a Washington, D.C., event today, Janet Napolitano warned that several major American financial institutions are being actively attacked by cyberhackers. But she offered no details.



U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said today that hackers are «actively» attacking some of the country's largest financial institutions.



Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano

(Credit: U.S. Department of Homeland Security)

According to a [report](#) in The Hill, America's top security official issued the warning at a Washington Post event today, but didn't specify the nature of the attacks.

«Right now, financial institutions are actively under attack,» The Hill quoted Napolitano as saying. «We know that. I'm not giving you any classified information... I will say this has involved some of our nation's largest institutions. We've also had our stock exchanges attacked over the last [few] years, so we know... there are vulnerabilities.»

Napolitano also said that the hackers have been successfully pilfering funds from the banks, but wouldn't elaborate.

Earlier this month, cyberthieves [stole \\$400,000](#) from Bank of America, and earlier in the fall, The Hill reported, Wells Fargo, JP Morgan Chase, Bank of America and other leading financial institutions were plagued with denial of service attacks.

Napolitano used the recent power outages -- and resulting loss of services -- on the East Coast due to Hurricane Sandy as an example of the disruption that cyberhackers could cause, and of the need to adequately protect America's vital institutions outside digital infiltration. «One of the possible areas of attack, of course, is attacks on our nation's control systems -- the control systems that operate our utilities, our water plants, our pipelines [and] our financial institutions,» The Hill quoted Napolitano as saying. «If you think that a critical systems attack that takes down a utility even for a few hours is not serious, just look at what is happening now that Mother Nature has taken out those utilities.»