

Grants help Del. towns improve cyber-safety

By Leah Burcat
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DOVER — As the Internet becomes more central to people's daily lives, it becomes more and more important that it is protected, said government officials on Monday as they showcased a federal grant that will provide cyber security training.

The U.S. Homeland Security Training grant was offered to just three states — Delaware, Texas and California — to help community leaders do more to protect state and local information resources.

Gov. Jack A. Markell, Sen. Thomas R. Carper, D-Del., Secretary of Technology and Information Jim Sills and Robert Mooney, mayor of Camden and representatives from the League of Local Governments, said they were excited to find a way to continue to protect Delawareans without using state funds.

"One of state government's most fundamental responsibilities is keeping the public safe," said Gov. Markell. "In today's world, it is not enough to just worry about the criminals on the street. We have to be prepared to protect Delawareans from on-line threats as well."

Through the Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security, based at the University of Texas in San Antonio, community leaders from two areas, greater Dover and greater Wilmington, will benefit from a series of no-cost cyber security classes, exercises, post-exercise analysis reports and hands-on training.

"Few Americans know that, every day, key information technology systems in government and throughout the private

sector are under attack by nation-states, hackers and cyber-terrorists looking to do us harm," said Sen. Carper. "Yet we depend on these systems for our military operations, to protect key pieces of infrastructure such as power plants and dams, and to facilitate routine business transactions."

"Well, we can wring our hands and say this is the world we live in, or we can do something about it," he said.

The cyber security training program will be a way to do something about it, Sen. Carper said.

The focus of the training is to provide a structured approach to prepare state and local officials for possible cyber attacks.

The training begins today, with the course, "Leading Cyber Security." This three-hour course will establish a common frame of reference for participants including covering who computer hackers are, what they target, how they attack and what senior leaders can do to protect their communities.

"DTI has been a leader in implementing cyber-security awareness and training in state government and we are thrilled by the opportunity to extend this comprehensive training and actual experience to our local government peers," said Mr. Sills.

"We welcome and need every possible resource to fight the attacks of cyber criminals and hackers."

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