# Florida city to pay $600K ransom to hacker who seized computer systems weeks ago!

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Thu June 20, 2019

NWC ALLIANCE · THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019 · 2 MINUTES

(CNN) — A Florida city is paying $600,000 in Bitcoins to a hacker who took over local government computers after an employee clicked on a malicious email link three weeks ago.

Riviera Beach officials voted this week to pay 65 Bitcoins to the hacker who seized the city's

computer systems, forcing the local police and fire departments to write down the hundreds of daily 911 calls on paper, CNN affiliate WPEC reported.

The 65 Bitcoins, which equals $600,000, will come from the city's insurance, officials said.

Once the payment is made, they hope to get access to data encrypted by the hacker. Even with the plans to pay the ransom, the city said, an investigation is under way.

Riviera Beach has a population of 35,000 and is about 80 miles from Miami.

Attacks by hackers are on the rise

Targeted ransomware attacks on local US government entities -- cities, police stations and schools -

- are on the rise, costing millions as some pay 0 the perpetrators in an effort to untangle themselves and restore vital systems.

Cybersecurity firm Recorded Future found that at least 170 county, city or state government systems have been attacked since 2013, including at least 45 police and sheriff's offices.

So far this year, there have been more than 20 public-sector attacks, which does not take into account those that often aren't reported until months or years later.

Just last month, Baltimore was infected with ransomware, forcing the city to quarantine its networks and provide most of its municipal services manually.

In March, the New York state capital of Albany quietly admitted it had been hit with ransomware on a Saturday -- a popular day for hackers because of minimal or no IT staff.

The city announced the attack the day it was discovered but downplayed its severity, announcing only that it had affected a handful of city services such as offices that issue marriage licenses and birth certificates. Many of those problems were cleared up by the beginning of the workweek.

However, it did not say the Albany Police Department's systems had been significantly impacted and crippled for a whole day.

CNN's Joe Sutton and Christine Sever contributed to this report

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