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U.S. warned of threat worse than Katrina, plague, WWII

Millions could die: 'This is clearly not something you ever want to experience'

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By Bob Unruh

WorldNetDaily

More horrifying than the plague of Black Death across Europe. More costly in lives than World War II. Financially it could make the Katrina repairs look like a pocketful of change. And it's not a matter of if, but when.

That's the alarming warning being issued by [John G. Kappenman](#), owner of Storm Analysis Consultants and an expert of the dangers of electromagnetic pulse damage to modern society, with a list of qualifications after his name as long as a phone book.

The issue of EMP dangers to the Earth, either from a CME, a coronal mass ejection, which basically is an eruption of power from the sun, or from a nuclear-triggered EMP wave that truly is intended to destroy a society, have been the subject of multiple reports in recent months.

[WND reported](#) just days ago that the U.S. House had authorized plans to defend America's power grid against such dangers, but the members of the Senate left citizens to fend for themselves, eliminating the contingency plans.

Kappenman was interviewed recently [on the radio program called OffTheGridNews](#), and explained that never before has civilization endured what could be coming, because historic storms hit before people were so dependant on electricity and all that it does, from turning on a cell phone to powering the pumps fueling the transportation system to keeping food from spoiling.

[Do you want to keep up on the EMP threat? Subscribe to the publication that broke the story in 2004 - Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin.](#)

The domino effect, he explained, is what could cause deaths in the millions. Millions? Really?

Yes, he said.

"The severity of the storm we're talking about here [could produce] widespread massive damage to the power grid," he said. "That could cause maybe a 4-10 year sort of damage to the power grid ... and an inability to restore that power grid.

(Story continues below)

"This is clearly not something you ever want to experience firsthand, it could lead to millions of casualties," he said.

But would losing power cause that much trouble? Not for an hour or two, but for several years, yes, he said.

"Within a matter of just a few hours, you'd worry about the loss of potable water for major metro areas. You'd lose the ability to pump and treat sewage. Within a matter of a day or so you'd be concerned about the loss of perishable foods. With a few days, you would have exhausted the food supplies available.

"Then within a matter of three days you have probably lost total ability to maintain any sort of telecommunication infrastructure," he said.

"We could be looking at a scenario here that far exceeds the casualties of any war, any natural disaster that humanity has ever experienced. And it may not be limited to North America."

When the U.S. Senate earlier rejected House plans to make preparations for such a disaster, [U.S. Rep. Roscoe Bartlett](#), R-Md., blasted the decision.

"While one part of the federal government was warning us of possible solar electromagnetic-pulse damage to our electric grid, a key Senate commission approved a bill to ignore this threat," he said.

"It's particularly ironic since the Senate amended a bill, H.R. 5026, approved *unanimously* by the House that would specifically protect the grid against solar EMP and other physical threats," he said.

[WND has reported for years on the devastating danger from an EMP attack that could be launched by a second-rate missile system against America.](#)

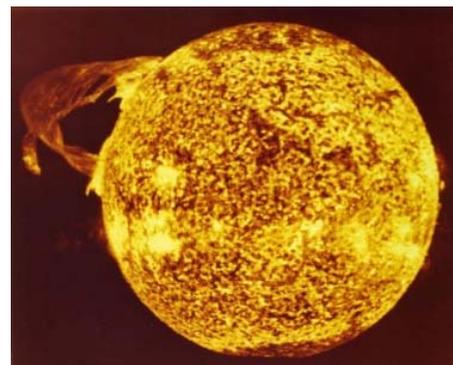
The concern is that any nuclear detonation that could be launched into the atmosphere anywhere from 25 to 250 miles above the United States could decimate the nation's electric grid, essentially transporting it instantly back to an era of mechanical machines and agriculture.

[One estimate just months ago suggested an effective EMP attack could leave 9 out of 10 Americans dead.](#)

Bartlett explained that the danger also comes from naturally occurring EMP signals from sources such as a solar storm.

Kappenman is one of the main investigators for the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP Commission). He also has testified before the U.S. House Science Committee on the importance of geomagnetic storm forecasting for the electric power industry.

He's also analyzed the situation for FEMA, contributed to a 2008 U.S. National Academy of Sciences Report on "Severe Space Weather Events - Understanding Societal and Economic Impacts Workshop Report Committee on the Societal and Economic Impacts of Severe Space Weather Events" and is a member of the Joint U.S. Dept of



Energy/NERC Steering Committee for developing and planning a conference on High Impact/Low Frequency (HILF) Threats to the U.S. power grids.

Bill Heid, who runs [Solutions from Science](#), which offers a number of remedies for the possibility of extended power outages and food shortages, said the fact that such a "surge" of power would accumulate in the power grid like a radio wave collects in an antenna means that the most critical components of the grid - the massive transformers that regulate power flow - probably would be hit hardest.

Those transformers, sometimes weighing in at 200 tons, cannot be replaced at the drop of a hat, nor are there a multitude of backups available. That, he explained, is why Kappenman estimated a recovery could take up to 10 years.

Those units would have to be manufactured, delivered and installed, and how would one install a 200-ton transformer without local access to power equipment (run by diesel pumped by electric pumps) and other such conveniences in the modern world. Too, how would one ship such equipment without being able to pump fuel into a cargo ship?

He noted that an electric storm that was recorded in 1859 had little effect because of the agrarian nature of the nation, where people were only a matter of steps from milk, eggs, butter, meat and even grain.

Further, the social unrest from diminishing and unstable food and water supplies also could be catastrophic, he noted.

"The fallout from that would be in a category ...we have difficulty thinking about," he said.

Kappenman said in the interview the events recorded in 1859, and again in 1921, are not only probable to repeat, but inevitable.

"There is nothing that has changed in the physics of the sun ... that will preclude a large storm from occurring again in the future. These are a certainty to occur in the future," he said.

In March 1889, he noted, there was a storm that produced a blackout all across Quebec. It developed from the first indicator of trouble to complete blackout in 92 seconds and "we came very close in the U.S. to a blackout that could have extended from New England ... all the way across to the Pacific Northwest."

At that time, the storm was ranked as among the most powerful ever, with maximum levels of 500 nanoteslas per minute, a ranking of energy surge.

But Kappenman said he's documented in history storms that reached 5,000, 10 times larger.

Failing to prepare, he said, is like Russian roulette.

"We may have pulled the trigger on an empty barrel this time but sooner or later that luck will not always hold out for us," he said.

According to Bartlett, the National Academies of Sciences predicted in a 2008 report that a solar geomagnetic storm as severe as the Carrington event that occurred in 1859 could inflict \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion damage.

Bartlett said the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee decided to dump the House plan, [H.R. 5026](#), which directed "the Secretary to establish a program to develop technical expertise in the protection of systems for the generation, transmission and distribution of electric energy against either geomagnetic storms or malicious acts using electronic communications or electromagnetic pulse."

Instead, adopted was a Senate plan, [S. 1462](#), which instead promotes "clean energy."

[WND reported previously when Bartlett warned such an attack virtually is inevitable.](#)

At that time, he said, while cyber-attacks are a concern, a "really robust [nuclear] EMP lay-down means microelectronics across the country would be shut down [and] you have no power ... there's one event that we will not avoid, and that is a solar electromagnetic interference, solar storm. If we have a big one like the one that occurred back in 1859, that would shut down the whole grid for quite a long while ... It would cost about \$100 million to protect much of the grid, but if the grid went down, it would cost us between \$1 trillion and \$2 trillion in damages, and the loss of life could be horrendous if in fact you were without electricity for months at a time."

William R. Graham, chairman of the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse Attack and the former national science adviser to President Reagan, had testified before the Congress and issued [an alarming report](#) on "one of a small number of threats that can hold our society at risk of catastrophic consequences."

He identified vulnerabilities in the nation's critical infrastructures that "are essential to both our civilian and military capabilities."

Not taking the steps necessary to reduce the threat "can both invite and reward attack," Graham told the members of Congress at the time.

EMP is a pulse of energy that can be produced from nonnuclear sources, such as electromagnetic bombs. Some experts claim an electromagnetic-pulse shock wave can be produced by a device small enough to fit in a briefcase. But the most threatening and terrifying type of EMP attack could come following a blast from a nuclear weapon 25 to 250 miles above the Earth's surface. Like a swift stroke of lightning, EMP could immediately disrupt and damage all electronic systems and America's electrical infrastructure. A detonation over the middle of the continental U.S. "has the capability to produce significant damage to critical infrastructures that support the fabric of U.S. society and the ability of the United States and Western nations to project influence and military power," said Graham.

"Several potential adversaries have the capability to attack the United States with a high-altitude nuclear-weapon-generated electromagnetic pulse, and others appear to be pursuing efforts to obtain that capability," said Graham. "A determined adversary can achieve an EMP attack capability without having a high level of sophistication. For example, an adversary would not have to have long-range ballistic missiles to conduct an EMP attack against the United States. Such an attack could be launched from a freighter off the U.S. coast using a short- or medium-range missile to loft a nuclear warhead to high altitude. Terrorists sponsored by a rogue state could attempt to execute such an attack without revealing the identity of the perpetrators. Iran, the world's leading sponsor of international terrorism, has practiced launching a mobile ballistic missile from a vessel in the Caspian Sea. Iran has also tested high-altitude explosions of the Shahab-III, a test mode consistent with EMP attack, and described the tests as successful. Iranian military writings explicitly discuss a nuclear EMP attack that would gravely harm the United States. While the commission does not know the intention of Iran in conducting these activities, we are disturbed by the capability that emerges when we connect the dots."

If you would like to sound off on this issue, participate in today's [WND Poll](#).

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