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C static code analysis

Unique rules to find Bugs, Vulnerabilities, Security Hotspots, and Code Smells in your C code

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Tags

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"memset" should not be used to delete sensitive data
Vulnerability

POSIX functions should not be called with arguments that trigger buffer overflows
Vulnerability

XML parsers should not be vulnerable to XXE attacks
Vulnerability

Function-like macros should not be invoked without all of their arguments
Bug

The address of an automatic object should not be assigned to another object that may persist after the first object has ceased to exist
Bug

"pthread_mutex_t" should be unlocked in the reverse order they were locked
Bug

"pthread_mutex_t" should be properly initialized and destroyed
Bug

"pthread_mutex_t" should not be consecutively locked or unlocked twice
Bug

Functions with "noreturn" attribute should not return
Bug

"memcmp" should only be called with pointers to trivially copyable types with no padding
Bug

Using "strlen" or "wcslen" is security-sensitive

Analyze your code

Security Hotspot   Major   cwe cert

The function `size_t strlen(const char *s)` measures the length of the string `s` (excluding the final null character).
The function `size_t wcslen(const wchar_t *s)` does the same for wide characters, and should be used with the same guidelines.

Similarly to many other functions in the standard C libraries, `strlen` and `wcslen` assume that their argument is not a null pointer.

Additionally, they expect the strings to be null-terminated. For example, the 5-letter string "abcde" must be stored in memory as "abcde\0" (i.e. using 6 characters) to be processed correctly. When a string is missing the null character at the end, these functions will iterate past the end of the buffer, which is undefined behavior.

Therefore, string parameters must end with a proper null character. The absence of this particular character can lead to security vulnerabilities that allow, for example, access to sensitive data or the execution of arbitrary code.

Ask Yourself Whether

- There is a possibility that the pointer is null.
- There is a possibility that the string is not correctly null-terminated.

There is a risk if you answered yes to any of those questions.

Recommended Secure Coding Practices

- Use safer functions. The C11 functions `strlen_s` and `wcslen_s` from annex K handle typical programming errors.
  Note, however, that they have a runtime overhead and require more code for error handling and therefore are not suited to every case.
- Even if your compiler does not exactly support annex K, you probably have access to similar functions.
- If you are writing C++ code, using `std::string` to manipulate strings is much simpler and less error-prone.

Sensitive Code Example

```
size_t f(char *src) {
  char dest[256];
  strncpy(dest, src, sizeof dest); // Truncation may happen
  return strlen(dest); // Sensitive: "dest" will not be null-
}
```

Compliant Solution

Stack allocated memory and non-owned memory should not be freed

Bug

Closed resources should not be accessed

Bug

Dynamically allocated memory should be released

Bug

Freed memory should not be used

```
size_t f(char *src) {
  char dest[256];
  strncpy(dest, src, sizeof dest); // Truncation may happen
  dest[sizeof dest - 1] = 0;
  return strlen(dest); // Compliant: "dest" is guaranteed to
}
```

See

- MITRE, CWE-120 - Buffer Copy without Checking Size of Input ('Classic Buffer Overflow')
- CERT, STR07-C. - Use the bounds-checking interfaces for string manipulation

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