



# Ohio's Emergency Management News

Aftermath of September 16, 2010 Tornadoes – Meigs County



John R. Kasich, Governor ★ Thomas P. Charles, ODPS Director ★ Nancy Dragani, Ohio EMA Executive Director

## Ohio Emergency Management Agency

[www.ema.ohio.gov](http://www.ema.ohio.gov)

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### Inside:

- County EMA News Briefs
- FEMA Disaster Assistance Website
- NOAA Weather Radios Save Lives
- Parts of Ohio and Indiana Rattled by 'Frost Quakes'
- National Terrorism Advisory System
- EMA Staff Updates
- Weather Spotter Training – Columbus
- Severe Weather Safety Campaign Dates
- Events Calendar

### Ohio Impacted but not Crippled by February Snow and Ice Storms

Two weeks ago, the majority of the state was impacted by blizzard conditions, heavy snow storms or freezing rain and ice storms. According to the State EOC situation reports, a significant winter storm affected the Ohio Valley January 31 – February 2, with a mixture of heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain.

Ice accumulations occurred north of the Cincinnati Tri-State region and into Miami Valley and central Ohio. Heavy snow and sleet affected northern Miami Valley and west-central Ohio; and northwest Ohio had blizzard warnings with 6-12 inches of blowing snow. The state experienced winter wind gusts up to 45 mph, Feb. 1-2. Primary impacts were power outages and limited transportation. On Feb. 1, more than 273,000 homes and businesses were without power across the state. The Ohio Department of Transportation had 976 crews working around the clock to work ice, snow and debris removal missions.

By Feb. 2, approximately 168,000 homes and businesses were without power – most being in Canton. Stark County declared a local emergency; 10 American Red Cross shelters and 10 warming stations in six counties opened; and 10 county EOCs opened to field resources and monitor the winter storms. The Canton Memorial Civic Center fed and sheltered more than 300 residents. 100 percent power restoration was not completed until Saturday, Feb. 5.

Gov. John Kasich and Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor visited the Canton Civil Center on Feb. 3 and credited the Stark County EMA and Red Cross for assisting the residents during the prolonged power outage.



The Stark County EOC operated on 24-hour shifts during the Jan 31-Feb 2 snow and ice storms. Pictured left to right: Dep. Dir. Rich Weber, Stark County EMA; Dir. Tim Warstler, Stark County EMA; Comm. William Franks, Stark County Public Health; and Chief Tom Burgasser, Massillon Fire Dept. (Photo use permitted by Stan Myer/Canton Repository)



# County EMA News Briefs

The following lists a few recent county EMA 'news briefs':

## **Fairfield County: Dam Owners Meeting**

The Fairfield County Emergency Management and Homeland Security conducted its first meeting for Class 1 Dam Owners on Dec. 15. Dir. Jon Kochis and Fairfield County have taken the lead in helping dam owners work with the Department of Natural Resources in getting their plans approved. Besides Fairfield County, ODNR officials conducted dam-owner and local official briefings in five other counties. This year, they will conduct these briefings in 12 counties.

## **Tuscarawas County: Ohio Farm Bureau**

Tuscarawas County EMA Director Patty Levensgood organized a course with the Ohio Farm Bureau for first responders on emergency response planning. More than 30 first responders participated.

## **Allen County: Senior Centers Receive Weather Radios**

Russell Decker, director of Allen County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management said that the county provided its senior citizens with weather radios. Local firefighters went to the seniors' residences to set up the radios and showed them how to operate them. This step ensured good reception and proper use of the radios.

## **Miami County Medical Reserve Corps**

The Northern Miami Valley Red Cross Chapter supports the Miami County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) with planning and assistance for volunteer reception centers (VRC). The VRC serves as a staging area for volunteers during times of disaster.

The American Red Cross is expert in dealing with volunteers, so it incorporated several of its ideas and forms into the VRC plan.

As a future activity, the Miami County MRC unit is planning an exercise that will include the ARC, the Miami County EMA, United Way of Troy, United Way of Tipp City, and the Troy Senior Citizen Center.



**FEMA**

**DisasterAssistance.gov**  
ACCESS TO DISASTER HELP AND RESOURCES

## **FEMA's Disaster Assistance Site Voted One of the Five Best Government Websites**

According to a Dec. 27 article posted on Congress.org, FEMA's DisasterAssistance.gov website is one of the five best government websites. The site, it said, performs a vital task: it makes important information easily available to citizens.

It allows users – primarily disaster victims or those preparing for an event like a winter storm or hurricane – to complete timely tasks like apply for assistance and check the status of any claims.

“The DisasterAssistance.gov website is quite strong in terms of usability,” said Rebecca Rubin of a D.C.-area web design firm. “The primary toolbar across the top of the page is organized into clear sections that help users local desired information easily and efficiently.” Rubin also liked the site's use of “breadcrumbs,” online design tools that allow users to easily retrace their steps.

DisasterAssistance.gov is also available from [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).



## NOAA Weather Radios Really Help Save Lives

Gary Garnet of the NWS-Cleveland forwarded the following e-mail message to Ohio EMA staff on Sept. 23, 2010.

Gary wrote: *“A very nice story about the success of NOAA Weather Radio for the (September) EF2 tornado in Wooster, Wayne County Ohio. I just thought you might like to see and use it as positive reinforcement that this stuff works.”*

“We were devastated by this tornado as well. We have been on Fox8 Cleveland. Davey Tree estimates a loss of between 300 and 400 trees. We are west of the Research center at 1388 South Honeytown Road. The damaged removed most of our roof covering as well. Thank God for the weather service!! I have a weather radio and pay close attention to it. When the Tornado Warning came on I think about 5:20 PM, I went to listen to it and though we might be in the path of it, I then looked out the front door and there it was ... throwing my neighbor’s barn in the air and it was coming toward me. I got my wife and daughter, along with our cat, then proceeded to a basement storage room where we covered ourselves with some moving blankets. Never have I been so frightened!!



Fox8-Cleveland file photo  
Tornado damage from the Sept. 16 EF2 tornado in Wooster, Ohio.

“Thank God we are survivors and in that regard, I am sure most people that have now lived through this feel the same. I don’t know how in the world we are going to pay the \$30-\$40,000 it is going to cost to clean up this mess. Our homeowners insurance will cover the cost of the damage to our home and personal property, but we are retired in our sixties, need I say more.

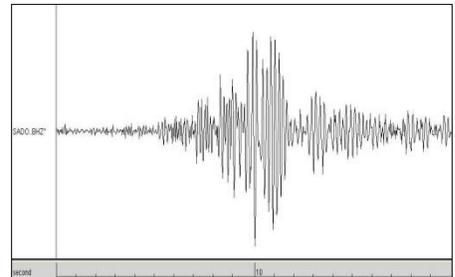
“My point in this e-mail was to let you know that we now appreciate NOAA Weather Radio in a whole different way. It is quite possible you could have been responsible for saving our lives as we are out of range of the warning sirens here. God bless all of you and we ask for your prayers as we try to move with our lives and try to restore some sense of order .... Thank You!!”

## Parts of Ohio and Indiana Rattled by “Frost Quakes”

(From February 11, 2011 news reports)

Hundreds of residents in Darke and Miami counties in Ohio and Randolph County in Indiana started their morning thinking an earthquake or explosion had occurred.

What really took place were frost quakes – rare phenomena that simulate earthquakes, according to emergency management officials. The quake or cryoseism occurs when temperatures fall below zero, causing moisture in rocks or soil to freeze and expand, setting off sudden and violent cracking.



Darke County’s 911 director said the quakes erupted for eight hours starting at 1 a.m. on February 11. The heaviest reports were between 5:30 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. Consultation with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and Ohio and Indiana emergency management offices led to the frost quake assessment.

No damages were reported. Similar frost quakes have occurred in Wisconsin, Michigan, Maine, Massachusetts and upstate New York.



# NTAS

National Terrorism Advisory System

Effective January 27, 2011, the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) replaced the color codes of the Homeland Security Advisory System. NTAS more effectively communicates information about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

Under the new system, DHS will coordinate with other federal entities to issue formal, detailed alerts when the federal government receives information about a specific or credible terrorist threat. These alerts will include a clear statement that there is an “imminent threat” or “elevated threat.” The alerts will also provide a concise summary of the potential threat, information about actions being taken to ensure public safety, and recommended steps that individuals and communities, businesses and governments can take.

The National Terrorism Advisory System alerts are based on the nature of the threat. In some cases, alerts will be sent directly to law enforcement or affected areas of the private sector, while in others, alerts will be issued more broadly to the American people through official and media channels – including a designated DHS webpage ([www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts)), and social media channels including Facebook and Twitter.

Also, NTAS will have a “sunset provision,” meaning that individual threat alerts will be issued with a specified end date. Alerts may be extended if new information becomes available or if the threat evolves significantly.

For additional information on the National Terrorism Advisory System, visit [www.dhs.gov/alerts](http://www.dhs.gov/alerts).

## **Ohio’s ‘Shaken Horizon’ Exercise Coincides with FEMA’s National Level Exercise 2011**

FEMA’s National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE-11) is scheduled for May 2011. The purpose of the exercise is to prepare and coordinate a multiple-jurisdictional integrated response to a national catastrophic event.

NLE-11 is designated as a Tier I National Level Exercise. Tier I exercises are conducted annually, in accordance with the National Exercise Program (NEP), which services as the nation’s overarching exercise program for planning, organizing, conducting and evaluating national level exercises. The NEP was established to provide the U.S. government, at all levels, exercise opportunities to prepare for catastrophic crises ranging from terrorism to natural disasters. NLE-11 will focus on regional catastrophic response and recovery activities between federal, regional, state, tribal, local and private sector participants.

Ohio EMA and the state of Ohio will participate in Shaken Horizon, an exercise that mirrors NLE-11 and emphasizes the role of the State Emergency Operations Center’s Emergency Support Function (ESF) staff in support of the local response to a catastrophic earthquake.

Shaken Horizon will focus on the following design objectives: Communications; Critical Resource Logistics and Distribution; Emergency Operations Center Management; Emergency Public Information and Warning; and Mass Care.

For additional information on Shaken Horizon, e-mail Darren Price, Ohio EMA Exercise Program Manager, at [DEPrice@dps.state.oh.us](mailto:DEPrice@dps.state.oh.us).



# County/State EMA Updates

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**Sonja Miller, Director**  
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Vinton County EMA  
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Trumbull County EMA  
**Office: 330-675-6601**  
[embeil@co.trumbull.oh.us](mailto:embeil@co.trumbull.oh.us)

**New Ohio EMA Personnel**  
**Peter Cline, Admin Assistant**  
Technical Support  
Office: 614-889-7156

**Edwin Filppi, Radiological Analyst**  
Radiological Branch (Lake County)  
Office: 440-918-5395

**Pam Harcarik, Planner**  
Response & Recovery Branch  
Office: 614-799-3679

**Peter Hill, Radiological Analyst**  
Radiological Branch  
Office: 614-799-3679

**William Melvin, Maintenance**  
Technical Support  
Office: 614-799-3632

**Sarah Moore, Planner**  
Plans Branch  
Office: 614-799-3827

**Tess Pelfrey, Secretary**  
Radiological Branch  
Office: 614-799-3822

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**Robert Bill, Supervisor**  
Communications & Instrumentation  
Branch – Resigned from Ohio EMA  
on Dec. 31 for position with MARCS

**Jessica Yuzwa, Ohio EMA**  
Lateral transfer from Planner to  
Grants Coordinator  
Office: 614-799-3603

**Richard Warren, Supervisor**  
Field Ops, Training & Exercise Branch  
Office: 889-7169



**Franklin County  
Emergency Management and  
Homeland Security**

Michael R. Pannell, Director



**Free Annual Weather-Spotter Training in  
Columbus, March 5**

(From Franklin County EM & HS news release, Feb. 16, 2011)

To promote community preparedness for severe spring weather in Ohio, Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security and The Ohio State University Emergency Management are co-sponsoring the annual Tornado and Severe Weather Spotter Seminar instructed by the National Weather Service-Wilmington Office. The seminar will be Saturday, March 5, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at The Fawcett Center, 2400 Olentangy River Road, Columbus.

The seminar will provide specialized training to citizens, public safety officers and emergency management personnel in how to spot, report and prepare for tornadoes and other severe spring weather conditions in Franklin County.

Training and parking are free. To register, e-mail Pam Tickle at [pktickle@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:pktickle@franklincountyohio.gov) by March 4. Driving directions to The Fawcett Center are available at [www.fawcettcenter.com/directions.asp](http://www.fawcettcenter.com/directions.asp).

**Severe Weather Safety Campaign Dates**

*National Flood Safety Awareness Week:*

March 14-18, 2011

*Ohio's Spring Severe Weather Awareness Week:*

March 20-26, 2011

*Statewide Tornado Drill:*

Wednesday, March 23 at 9:50 a.m.

*National Lightning Safety Awareness Week:*

June 19-25, 2011

*Ohio's Winter Safety Awareness Week:*

November 13-19, 2011

[www.weathersafety.ohio.gov](http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov)



| Sunday                           | Monday                                   | Tuesday  | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday                                       |
|----------------------------------|--|--|-----------|----------|--------|--|
| Feb. 20                          | 21                                       | 22   | 23        | 24       | 25     | 26   |
|                                  |  | Evacuation & Re-Entry Planning<br>Ohio EMA     |           |          |        |  |
| 27                               | 28                                       | March 1  | 2         | 3        | 4      | 5  |
|                                  |  | Mass Fatalities Incidents Response<br>Ohio EMA |           |          |        | Weather Spotter<br>Training<br>OSU-Fawcett Ctr |
| 6                                | 7  | 8  | 9         | 10       | 11     | 12   |
|                                  |  | Business<br>Continuity<br>COTC Pataskala       |           |          |        |  |
| 13                               | 14                                       | 15   | 16        | 17       | 18     | 19   |
| Daylight<br>Savings Begins       | Debris Mgmt<br>Overview<br>Butler Co EMA | Community Mass Care Management<br>Ohio EMA     |           |          |        |  |
| 20                               | 21                                       | 22   | 23        | 24       | 25     | 26   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Day of<br>Spring |  |  |           |          |        |  |