



# STATE OF OHIO

## Emergency Operations Center

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### Joint Information Center **NEWS RELEASE** *2005 Severe Winter Weather Update #6*

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 11, 2005

For more information:

9:30 p.m.

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### **56 COUNTIES ARE NOW UNDER A STATE OF EMERGENCY** **State Continues to Coordinate Response in Affected Areas**

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** – Governor Bob Taft has announced an additional seven counties under a state of emergency bringing the total number to 56. Fayette, Meigs, Morrow, Noble, Pickaway, Pike and Clinton counties are now part of the growing list of affected Ohio areas. After severe ice storms, heavy snowfalls and flooding began hitting Ohio in late December more than fourteen state agencies have been at work conducting search and rescue missions, detouring traffic, working to reopen roads and tracking power outages.

“We are already seeing state resources have a positive impact in areas of need throughout Ohio,” Governor Bob Taft said. “State agencies, utilities and local public safety personnel have performed an extraordinary job under great pressure to respond to adverse conditions and return life to normal in affected communities.”

Governor Bob Taft has declared 56 counties under a State of Emergency declaration: Allen, Ashland, Athens, Auglaize, Belmont, Brown, Butler, Champaign, Clark, Clermont, Clinton, Coshocton, Crawford, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Greene, Guernsey, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Highland, Hocking, Holmes, Huron, Jefferson, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Mercer, Meigs, Miami, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Morrow, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Richland, Ross, Seneca, Shelby, Tuscarawas, Union, Warren, Washington, Wayne and Wyandot.

The agencies participating in the state EOC include: Department of Transportation, Department of Administrative Services, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Health, ODOT Aviation, Department of Natural Resources, Ohio EMA, Department of Agriculture, Ohio National Guard, the Ohio State Highway Patrol, Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, Department of Public Safety, Department of Job and Family Services and the Public Utilities Commission. The American Red Cross is coordinating shelter needs, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency is monitoring the situation.

#### **STATE AGENCY ACTIVITIES**

Throughout the night, **Ohio Department of Transportation** crews will be patrolling SR 2, SR124, SR144 and SR 60 in Washington, Meigs and Athens counties, to watch for slips on these roads. There are currently 44 state and US routes that are closed due to high water. ODOT has 114 crews working in Northern Ohio removing snow and ice. During the height of the recent storm, ODOT had 653 crews working throughout the state and 143 roads were closed. Interstate 77 ramps to State Route 212 in Tuscarawas County remain closed. ODOT continues to assist with debris removal in Athens, Belmont, Richland and Washington counties.

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**Ohio Department of Natural Resources** has rescued 41 people in ten missions. The Division of Water continues to monitor the river gauges for flooding potential. The Division of Mineral Resources has crews working on slippage sites in Belmont, Muskingum and Guernsey counties. The Division of Parks is housing two families at Burr Oak State Park. ODNR's Division of Soil and Water are assisting with a log jam on the Mad River and the Division of Forestry is assisting the city of Bellfontaine with tree damages. ODNR has Swift Water Rescue Boats on standby at where needed.

**Ohio Environmental Protection Agency** continues to monitor waste water treatment plants and public water supplies. EPA is assisting in debris removal and is providing technical assistance upon request.

**PUCO** reports that approximately 9,300 customers remain without power. At the height of the severe weather approximately 237,000 customers were without power.

**Ohio Department of Health** delivered 100 doses of tetanus vaccine to Washington County. ODH continues to remain in contact with local health departments and nursing homes that were affected by outages. Information on water sampling has been sent to Crawford and Marion County Health Departments. Health districts in Athens, Muskingum, Pickaway and Washington counties are contacting ODH regarding manufactured home parks that were affected by recent flooding.

**Ohio Department of Administrative Services** has coordinated equipment to assist with local officials. The **Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections** also has one tub grinder that will assist Mercer County tomorrow.

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** continues to try and remove the four sunken barges at the Belleville Locks and Dam. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is monitoring a possible loss in the navigation pool between the Belleville Locks and Dam to the Willow Island Locks and Dam. A loss in the pool could affect industrial intake and some areas along the river may suffer bank failure and slips. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tuscarawas County EMA, Ohio EMA and ODNR are also monitoring the Bolivar Dam in Tuscarawas County.

**Ohio EMA** continues to coordinate activities from the State EOC and will support county emergency management agencies as needed. Currently, liaisons are supporting county EMAs in Clinton, Fairfield and Logan counties.

**Department of Agriculture** continues to monitor the impact to agricultural communities through farm service extension agencies.

The **American Red Cross** has closed shelters. One service center remains open in Washington County. The Red Cross continues to do outreach casework in all the affected counties. During the weather event, 40 shelters were opened with 554 people. During this time 2,449 meals were served.

**Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters** is locating flood clean-up kits for homeowners.

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