

**NEWS RELEASE**



**Governor Bob Taft**

**TAFT ANNOUNCES FEMA TO CONDUCT PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS**

*Damage in seven Ohio counties to be assessed following severe June storms*

COLUMBUS (July 17, 2006) –Governor Bob Taft today announced that damage assessment teams from the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will begin to conduct preliminary damage assessments for local governments and private-non-profit organizations in seven northern Ohio counties resulting from the severe storms of June 21-23, 2006.

“Based upon information I have received, there is a clear need for FEMA to determine the impact these storms had upon local governments,” said Taft. “City, township and county officials have done a tremendous job of responding to these devastating storms without regard to financial costs, now it is time to explore options for returning that money to the local communities.”

The joint preliminary damage assessment teams will begin meeting with local officials on Wednesday. Counties scheduled to have assessments are Cuyahoga, Erie, Huron, Lucas, Sandusky, Stark and Van Wert. Depending on the extent and severity of the damage quantified by the teams, federal disaster assistance may be available for local governments and certain non-profit organizations.

On July 2, 2006, Governor Taft announced that federal disaster assistance was available to residents and businesses in six counties across northern Ohio including Cuyahoga, Erie, Huron, Lucas, Sandusky and Stark.

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