

## NEWS RELEASE



**Governor Bob Taft**

### **26 COUNTIES ELIGIBLE FOR DECEMBER 2004 SNOW REMOVAL REIMBURSEMENT Governments in Erie, Morrow and Wyandot counties now eligible for federal disaster funds**

COLUMBUS (January 26, 2005) – Governor Bob Taft announced today that local government entities in Erie, Morrow and Wyandot counties may now apply for financial assistance to offset eligible costs incurred during the severe winter storm December 22-24, 2004. The emergency federal declaration clears the way for affected governments in these counties to seek reimbursement for snow removal related to ensuring public safety. A total of 26 counties are now eligible for disaster funds for public assistance.

“The record amounts of snow put additional financial strain on local governments who worked around the clock to remove snow and ensure public safety,” said Taft. “I am pleased that President Bush has made reimbursements available to government entities in additional counties.”

The emergency declaration through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) covers jurisdictions with record and near-record snowfall from the storm that occurred over the period of December 22-24, 2004. Under the emergency declaration, FEMA will provide reimbursement to state and local government agencies for 75 percent of the total eligible costs of equipment, contracts and personnel overtime related to emergency services in dealing with the snow over a 48-hour period.

The consecutive 48-hour period as defined by the applicant are the crucial hours when work crews clear snow from emergency routes and roads to critical facilities to permit the passage of emergency vehicles. Related emergency protective measures such as sanding and salting will also be eligible for reimbursement.

The Ohio Emergency Management Agency administers the federal program and along with FEMA will soon begin briefings in each declared county explaining assistance parameters. The following counties are now eligible for emergency snow removal reimbursement: Butler, Champaign, Clark, Crawford, Darke, Delaware, Erie, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Hardin, Huron, Logan, Madison, Marion, Miami, Montgomery, Morrow, Preble, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Warren and Wyandot.

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