

NEWS RELEASE



Governor Bob Taft

TAFT REQUESTS FEDERAL DISASTER AID FOR NINE MORE COUNTIES
More than \$2.5 million approved for disaster recovery assistance for winter storm victims

COLUMBUS (March 8, 2005) – Governor Bob Taft today requested federal disaster assistance for residents in nine additional counties that were affected by the severe winter storms and flooding during the period of December 22, 2004, through February 1, 2005.

“We need federal assistance to help Ohio families and businesses recover from the recent flooding, snow and ice storms, Taft said. “With President Bush’s approval, we will be able to help affected Ohioans bounce back from these terrible storms.”

If the request is approved by President George W. Bush, residents and business owners in **Darke, Fairfield, Guernsey, Hocking, Holmes, Licking, Richland, Stark and Tuscarawas** counties may register for federal disaster assistance. Damage assessments in these nine counties estimate 10,458 structures were impacted by the winter storms.

A total of \$2.5 million in grants for home repairs, personal losses, housing assistance, flood insurance and other needs has helped Ohioans recover from one of the most widespread weather events in Ohio history. In addition, the Small Business Administration has issued 1,723 low-interest loan applications to homeowners, renters and business owners throughout Ohio.

More than 2,600 people have registered for federal disaster aid since February 15, when President Bush approved federal individual assistance for Athens, Belmont, Clark, Coshocton, Crawford, Delaware, Franklin, Henry, Jefferson, Logan, Morgan, Muskingum, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Warren and Washington counties.

Individuals and businesses who have suffered damages or losses in the counties eligible for federal individual assistance may apply for disaster help by calling FEMA’s toll-free number: **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or on the internet at www.fema.gov. The speech or hearing impaired may call **TTY 1-800-462-7585**.

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