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Disaster News

SNOW REMOVAL ASSISTANCE REACHES NEARLY \$2.6 MILLION

COLUMBUS, OH – Eligible snow related costs and expenses approved for reimbursement by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have reached more than \$2.6 million. Today the Ohio Emergency Management Agency began mailing reimbursements to eligible applicants in 26 counties.

“These funds are designed to relieve the emergency costs on local budgets and we are processing the grants as quickly as possible,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Lee Champagne of FEMA.

On January 11, 2005, President Bush made an emergency declaration for snow removal and response cost reimbursements during the severe winter storm December 22-24, 2004. The declaration enables declared counties to choose 48 consecutive hours in which their snow preparations, removal and response costs were maximized and seek reimbursement for those costs. FEMA provides 75 percent of eligible costs.

“Based on record snowfall in the affected areas, it was evident that local resources would be tasked,” said Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Nancy Dragani. “The holiday snow storm really put a strain on many local governments’ budgets.”

Reimbursable costs may include use of equipment, such as spreaders and snowplows; overtime costs for labor related to snow removal expenses and expended materials, such as salt and sand. The Ohio counties eligible to apply for snow related costs are: 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.

The Ohio EMA coordinates the state's response and recovery from the State of Ohio Emergency Operations Center. One of the primary focuses of the agency is to ensure that Ohio citizens are prepared for all hazards with the capability to respond to and recover from an emergency or disaster and to lead mitigation efforts against the effects of future disasters.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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