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FEMA DR 1656-OH NR 021

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Disaster News

Only One Week Left to Apply for Disaster Assistance

CLEVELAND -- Only one week remains for residents and business owners in the disaster-declared counties who sustained damage from the severe storms and flooding of July 27 through Aug. 4 to apply for disaster assistance.

Officials with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urge residents in Ashtabula, Geauga and Lake counties to apply for disaster assistance by the Sept. 30 deadline.

"We will continue processing claims after that date for those residents who already have applied for assistance," Jesse Munoz, FEMA's federal coordinating officer, said. "We are committed to helping eligible individuals recover from this disaster."

"We want everyone to realize that missing the deadline equates to missing an opportunity to receive assistance," said Nancy J. Dragani, Ohio EMA's executive director.

Residents who suffered losses should apply immediately by calling the toll-free number 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or TTY number 1-800-462-7585 for the speech or hearing impaired. Telephone lines are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. People also may apply online at www.fema.gov.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

The Ohio EMA coordinates state assistance and resources during an emergency and prepares the state for all hazards through planning, training, exercises and funding activities at the state and local levels. This includes providing eligible assistance to individuals and governmental entities recovering from disaster-related damage and costs.

County EMA plans, trains and exercises for any emergency/disaster, natural or man-made that may impact the county. County EMA coordinates the local disaster declaration and, when needed, coordinates response and recovery efforts with the Ohio EMA and FEMA. After the disaster is over, county EMA works with local, state and federal officials to identify and implement mitigation efforts, which may limit the occurrence of future disasters.

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