



Disaster News

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ASHTABULA, LAKE and GEAUGA COUNTIES DESIGNATED FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Local governments now eligible to receive federal and state aid

CLEVELAND – Disaster assistance for Ashtabula, Lake and Geauga counties has been expanded to include aid for local governments affected by the recent storms and flooding in Ohio, the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today.

FEMA Director R. David Paulison said the additional assistance was approved following a review of damage data gathered by federal and state disaster recovery officials. Under the original declaration issued by President Bush on August 1, the counties were eligible for federal individual assistance to individuals, families and business owners.

“Our continuing commitment is not only to help meet the recovery needs of devastated families and businesses, but to ensure that the vital community services they also depend on are restored as quickly and efficiently as possible,” said Paulison.

Under the expanded assistance, FEMA said affected governmental entities and certain private non-profit organizations in Ashtabula, Lake and Geauga counties are eligible to apply for federal funds to pay 75 percent of the approved cost for debris removal, emergency services related to the disaster, and repairing or replacing damaged public facilities such as roads, buildings and utilities.

Procedures for requesting the assistance will be explained at a series of applicant briefings for local officials at locations to be announced shortly by state and federal disaster officials.

The disaster-designated counties are ASHTABULA, LAKE AND GEAUGA.

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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.