



FEMA

Disaster News

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MORE THAN \$12.5 MILLION APPROVED IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

CLEVELAND -- More than \$12.5 million in disaster assistance grants and loans have been approved, according to federal and state recovery officials. More than 5,500 residents have applied for disaster assistance in **Ashtabula, Geauga, and Lake** counties in northeast Ohio.

The following is an update of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) recovery activities as of close of business Thursday, August 24.

- **5,500** individuals (homeowners and renters) have applied for assistance in the three counties designated for Individual Assistance.
- **More than \$7.5 Million** in grants have been approved through the Individuals and Household Program. (This assistance may be for temporary disaster housing assistance; repairing disaster-damaged, uninsured homes to a safe, sanitary and functional condition; and replacement grants for serious, disaster-related needs and expenses not covered by insurance or other assistance programs.)
- More than **4,700** low-interest disaster loan applications have been issued by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and **\$4.9 Million** has been approved. SBA officials encourage anyone who has received an application to turn it in as soon as possible to be eligible for any further assistance.

Residents of the three eligible counties may still apply for assistance by calling the FEMA toll-free number **1-800-621-FEMA or TTY 1-800-462-7585** for the speech and hearing impaired. Phone lines will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are also available to answer calls. People may also register for assistance online at www.fema.gov. **The deadline for residents in Ashtabula, Geauga, and Lake counties to apply is Sept. 30, 2006.**

SBA offers disaster loans up to \$200,000 to repair disaster-damaged primary residences. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to replace damaged personal property such as furniture and clothing. Loans to businesses of all sizes and nonprofit organizations up to \$1.5 million are available to repair or replace damaged real estate, machinery and equipment, supplies, and inventory.

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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 directors must plan, train, and exercise for any possible emergency/disaster, natural or man-made, that may impact the county, with the express intent of saving lives and protecting property. Working with county commissioners, the county EMA directors initiate the issuance of a disaster declaration and, when needed, coordinate response and recovery efforts with the Ohio EMA and FEMA. After the disaster is over, the county EMA director works closely with local, state, and federal officials to identify and implement mitigation efforts, which may limit the occurrence of future disasters.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, an applicant must complete an SBA loan application to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.