



STATE OF OHIO

Emergency Operations Center

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

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Severe Winter Weather Update #2 *Ohio Snow and Ice Storms, Flooding*

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Twelve state agencies and volunteer organizations continue to coordinate state activities from the State of Ohio Emergency Operations Center today, providing resources and assessing damages caused by statewide severe winter storms and heavy rains.

The 14 counties that declared local emergencies earlier today have been added to the Governor's declaration dated December 23. The following counties are under the Governor's State of Emergency Declaration: Allen, Ashland, Athens, Auglaize, Butler, Crawford, Clark, Champaign, Coshocton, Darke, Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Greene, Hamilton, Hardin, Highland, Hocking, Holmes, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Morgan, Perry, Preble, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Warren and Washington.

A Governor's declaration allows state resources to be used to assist local governments and coordinate activities from the State of Ohio Emergency Operations Center.

"We will continue coordinating missions and operations to assist local governments in helping people recover from these storms as quickly as possible," said Dale Shipley, executive director of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency.

STATE AGENCY ACTIVITIES

Ohio Dept. of Transportation has currently has 360 crews assisting with road closure and debris removal in Crawford, Darke, Logan and Noble counties. ODOT reported four main interstate closures due to high water: I-71 northbound at the 70-71 split; I-70 eastbound at the State Route 79 exit; I-270 eastbound ramp to US 23 North; and I-270 westbound ramp to US 23 South. A total of 128 roads remain closed.

ODOT Aviation provided helicopter support flying to Crawford County to check downed power lines.

Ohio State Highway Patrol continues to assist ODOT and local officials with traffic control and road closures throughout affected jurisdictions. OSHP urges people to never drive through flooded roadways. Six inches of rushing floodwater can lift a vehicle off the road.

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Ohio Environmental Protection Agency reported water boil advisories for Chillicothe, Logan and Madison, Ohio. Multiple counties' well fields are flooded. At this time, Ohio EPA tests indicate water is safe to drink.

Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources assisted in four water rescues and evacuations today: Two trailer park evacuations of 21 people in McConnellsville, and two elderly couples near the Muskingum/Morgan County area.

PUCO reported at the afternoon briefing that 237,900 Ohio customers were without electric service and 9,817 telephone customers were without service

Dayton Power & Light – 52,000 customers without service in six counties

Cinergy – No outages in Ohio, but 30,000 customers in Indiana remain without power

FirstEnergy – 106,000 customers without service

Cleveland Electric Illuminating (FirstEnergy) – 2,500 customers without service in three counties. Anticipate restoration by midnight, tonight.

American Electric Power – 79,490 customers without power

Ohio Rural Cooperative reported five to eight cooperative systems have major outages.

Sprint – 9,817 customers without telephone service in three cities (Lima, Mansfield and Sidney)

Ohio Dept. of Agriculture is assessing damage and problem areas associated with flooding and power outages in the state. Two meat packing plants are closed because of flooding, one located in Darke County and one in Hocking County. Another plant, in Ottawa County, is closed due to a power failure. USDA's Ohio Farm Service Agency reported many Holmes County dairy farms are affected by the power outage and flooding.

Ohio Dept. of Administrative Services has fielded requests for generators and drinking water.

Ohio EMA continues to coordinate activities from the State EOC. Field liaisons are supporting county EMAs in Auglaize, Coshocton, Richland and Ross counties.

With multiple evacuations across the state, the **American Red Cross** reports shelters being open in the following areas:

Ashland County – shelter open in Miller and Orange, Ohio

Allen County – Lima, Ohio

Champaign County – St. Paris and Lewisburg, Ohio

Coshocton – Warsaw and Tiverton, Ohio

Fairfield – Lancaster, Ohio

Franklin County – Ohio Exposition Center, Columbus

Madison County – Tolles Technical Center

Caseworkers are available at shelters to help families assess emergency needs.

For more winter weather safety tips, log onto: [www.ema.ohio.gov/PDFs/Severe Weather/Winter2004.pdf](http://www.ema.ohio.gov/PDFs/Severe_Weather/Winter2004.pdf)

For up-to-date information on road closures, visit: www.buckeyetraffic.org

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