

NEWS RELEASE



Governor Bob Taft

PRESIDENT APPROVES TAFT'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE *Twenty-seven Ohio counties now eligible to receive federal individual assistance*

COLUMBUS (March 9, 2005) – Governor Bob Taft today announced President George W. Bush approved the addition of nine counties to the state's federal major disaster declaration. Governor Taft requested the declaration expansion yesterday.

Residents and business owners in **Darke, Fairfield, Guernsey, Hocking, Holmes, Licking, Richland, Stark** and **Tuscarawas** counties who sustained damages from the severe winter storms and flooding during the period of December 22, 2004 and February 1, 2005 are now eligible to register for federal individual assistance.

“I thank President Bush for responding quickly to our request to assist Ohioans in these nine counties who were severely impacted by the winter storms,” said Taft. “With this aid, families and communities will be able to recover from this disaster.”

People in Athens, Belmont, Clark, Coshocton, Crawford, Delaware, Franklin, Henry, Jefferson, Logan, Morgan, Muskingum, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Warren and Washington have been eligible to apply for federal individual assistance since February 15. Residents in the 27 eligible counties can register for assistance by calling **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585**, or via the Internet at **www.fema.gov**. The registration deadline is April 18, 2005.

Federal Individual Assistance includes the Individuals and Households Program (IHP) Disaster Housing Assistance and Other Needs Assistance (ONA); Disaster Unemployment Assistance; Disaster Legal Services; Crisis Counseling; Small Business Administration Home, Personal Property, Business and Economic Injury Disaster Loan Programs; appropriate agriculture programs; and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Low-interest Small Business Administration loans are included in federal disaster assistance.

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