



Media Contact: Ohio EMA Public Affairs, 614-799-3699
For Immediate Release: **January 4, 2022**

Ohio EMA Offers Rebates to Homeowners for Tornado Safe Rooms *Application Period is Open January 4 – February 4*

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Homeowners throughout Ohio now have the opportunity to apply to receive reimbursement for the purchase and construction/installation of a tornado safe room inside or outside their homes.

A safe room is a structure specifically designed to provide protection in extreme weather events. The Ohio Emergency Management Agency's (Ohio EMA) rebate program provides a rebate of up to 75 percent to homeowners selected for the program.

Ohio EMA is accepting applications for its Ohio Safe Room Rebate Program, January 4 through February 4, 2022.

"In neighboring Kentucky last month, a catastrophic tornado killed close to 100 people, and Ohio has seen its own share of deadly tornadoes as well," said Governor Mike DeWine. "Because our entire state is vulnerable to tornadoes, we're offering these rebates to help cover some of the costs associated with the added protection of a safe room."

Last year, the National Weather Service (NWS) confirmed that twenty-eight tornadoes touched down in Ohio, including the December 11, 2021 EF-1 tornado in Hardin County, and two separate "tornado outbreaks" in October 2021 that totaled fourteen different tornadoes.

"Safe rooms offer protection to a tornado's strong winds and resulting airborne debris and provides near-absolute protection for occupants," said Ohio EMA Executive Director Sima Merick. "We urge Ohioans to apply for these grants."

This is the ninth year for the Ohio Safe Room Rebate Program. To date, more than \$1.9 million in rebates have been awarded to homeowners for the construction of more than 250 safe rooms across the state.

Safe rooms can be constructed/installed in one of several places in the home, including in the basement; beneath a concrete slab-on-grade foundation or garage floor; or in an interior room on the first floor. A safe room may also be buried in the yard or be a stand-alone structure near the home.

The deadline to apply to participate in the Ohio Safe Room Rebate Program is February 4, 2022 at 5:00 PM.

Residents selected for the program are eligible for a rebate up to 75 percent of the cost to install or construct a safe room – up to a maximum of \$4,875.

For more information and to apply, visit the [Ohio EMA Safe Room Rebate Program](#) webpage.

Additional Information: The Ohio Safe Room Rebate Program will use a computerized random selection process to select applicants. A priority list of applicants will be created from the selected applicants. Chosen homeowners will be notified by email of their position on the priority list on or after February 21, 2022. Ohio EMA anticipates grant funding will become available this year and having a list of participants who meet program requirements will expedite the rebate process.

Funding for the rebate program is through a partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs. Ohio homeowners would be responsible for 25 percent of the construction costs and any additional costs over the 75 percent maximum rebate of \$4,875.

Safe rooms must meet FEMA requirements in FEMA publications 320 and 361 and cannot be constructed/installed prior to the rebate drawing and notification from Ohio EMA to proceed with construction. Ohio EMA plans to offer this rebate program on an annual basis.

Homeowners with questions should call Ohio Emergency Management Agency Mitigation Specialist Dan Clevidence at 614-799-3533.

###