

Lake County ends emergency declaration

News-Now 8/17/12

John Arthur Hutchison
jhutchison@News-Herald.com
Twitter: @news heraldgh

Lake County commissioners agreed Friday to terminate the local Declaration of Emergency that was issued after a storm July 20 dropped up to 6 inches of rain in six hours in the county.

Commissioners had made the formal declaration of emergency on July 23 and it remained in effect until 4:30 p.m. Friday.

County Emergency Management Agency Director Larry Greene said although coordination with the state of Ohio to help repair damaged public infrastructure and reimburse local governments for eligible costs associated with response to the event

continues, he believes such activities can officially reside within the scope of daily operations.

"Long-term recovery efforts coordinated by 211 and the Citizen Corps Council will continue to address the needs of the elderly and functional needs population affected by the flooding," Greene said in a news release.

As a result of heavy flooding throughout the county, more than 3,500 damage assessments were conducted on various structures by the American Red Cross, local building inspectors, and county and state EMA officials.

"It does not appear that Lake County will meet the required threshold of 25 homes or businesses destroyed or with 40 percent unin-

sured major damage," Greene said. "This threshold is required to qualify for a Small Business Administration declaration by the Federal Emergency Management Agency."

He said 11 structures in Lake County were determined to have sustained major damage under FEMA's new damage assessment criteria that were adopted in July 2012.

Greene said the number is not expected to increase.

"We understand many individuals have damage to their structures that did not meet FEMA's criteria," he said. "The cost to fix this damage does place a difficult financial burden on homeowners and businesses."

Greene said one option people

may consider is to explore assistance through the Ohio State Treasurer's Rebuild Ohio Program.

Eligibility for this program depends on each individual's particular circumstances, he said.

Information regarding the Rebuild Ohio Program can be found at www.ohio.gov/renewrebuild#rebuild.

County Administrator Jason Boyd said local governmental entities continue to work with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency for public assistance through the State Disaster Relief Program.

Gov. John Kasich is reviewing the application submitted by Lake County for SDRP, Boyd said.

The state program helps communities recover from major events in circumstances where the local gov-

ernmental entity does not meet the damage threshold for a federal disaster declaration from FEMA.

Eligible governmental entities may be reimbursed up to 75 percent of their costs associated with debris removal and public infrastructure repair, Boyd said. To qualify, such costs must exceed one-half of 1 percent of an entity's general operating budget.

As part of the county's local emergency declaration, commissioners extended the hours of operation at the county landfill in Painesville Township and fees had been waived to dump flood debris.

Hours are now back to normal at the landfill and the county will no longer waive the dumping fees, Boyd said.