



## Cuyahoga County

August 10, 2024

Governor Mike DeWine  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

As you are aware, on Tuesday afternoon a severe weather system swept through Northeast Ohio that included instances of tornadoes, high gusts of winds, and severe thunderstorms that damaged infrastructure, homes, businesses, and public buildings. The damage from the storm system has left hundreds of thousands of Cuyahoga County residents without electricity.

Today, I am asking you to waive the state-imposed threshold requirement and declare a State of Emergency to bring needed resources to our community and residents. I have declared a state of emergency for Cuyahoga County.

As soon as the storm was imminent, Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) immediately launched a coordinated response, working with the 59 communities in our county to identify needs, assess damage, and restore power to hospitals and senior high rises. The County's Public Works team has been busy clearing downed trees and debris from damaged buildings.

County OEM also requested and received assistance from the State of Ohio's Department of Public Health to bring an oxygen tank refill station into our hardest hit communities. This tank has been mobilized at MetroHealth hospital in Cleveland and will also serve County residents from a new base in Brook Park today. We also reached out to Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services to ensure SNAP recipients can receive their benefits.

While our community continues to recover, hundreds of thousands of residents remain without power. County OEM has been working closely with the Ohio Emergency Management Agency to catalogue all damages and expenses incurred by our communities to meet the State prescribed threshold of \$5.9 million to make a declaration of emergency. Our communities have been responsive to us to fulfill this State mandate, but as of this moment, that number has not been reached, per State requirements. We anticipate that number could be reached soon but, in the meantime, we urge that the threshold be waived.

Power utilities have indicated electricity may not be restored to all residents until late next week and the recovery from storms will take weeks and months. Ongoing recovery services are necessary from state departments and agencies to assist our residents, families, businesses, and local communities to alleviate the consequences of this storm system.

Your urgent action is respectfully requested.

Sincerely,

Chris Ronayne  
County Executive