

Storm Damage \$22 Million, Gilligan Asks Disaster Aid

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GOV. JOHN J. GILLIGAN asked President Nixon today for disaster assistance to Lorain and Erie counties and six others hit by this week's storm — "a real human tragedy."

And the state Office of Civil Defense in the Ohio Adjutant General's office raised damage estimates from \$10 million to \$22 million.

In Lorain County, local officials made estimates of more than \$700,000 in public damages and \$500,000 in private damage.

In Erie County, the local damages estimates exceeded \$800,000, public; \$4 million, private.

THE OTHER six counties were Lucas, Ottawa, Cuyahoga, Lake, Sandusky and Ashtabula.

According to Gilligan, the storm's private property damage totalled \$17.8 million; the public damage, \$4.2 million — far above the federal requirement for disaster assistance.

He urged prompt Presidential action "so that those Ohioans who were left homeless or who suffered extensive property damage can begin to rebuild." In Lorain, City Service Director Elio Jacobozzi told The Journal: "I would almost guess that every home on that lake front (Lake Erie) has received some damage."

In Columbus, the governor told reporters that the storm was "a real human tragedy for its victims."

And he said today that more than 300 troops will remain in some disaster areas "until Saturday, assisting in evacuation efforts, helping shore up damaged roads and bridges, patrolling against looters and helping victims return to their homes. . . ."

"We cannot prevent weather disasters, but we can meet them when they come and we can move swiftly to minimize damage and hold casualties to a minimum."

In Lorain and Erie counties, officials today offered the following estimates, based on information received yesterday:

LORAIN COUNTY:

Total: \$750,000 public, \$500,000 private.

Lorain: Up perhaps \$500,000 damage, mainly to the sewage plant, \$50,000 general public; \$150,000 private.

Vermilion: (as reported by Lorain County Civil Defense officials) \$5,000 public; \$200,000 private.

Sheffield Lake: \$35,000 public.

Avon Lake: \$200,000 public; \$200,000 private.

ERIE COUNTY

Sandusky: \$300,000 public; \$2,250,000 private.

Huron: \$50,000 public; \$1,200,000 private.

Bay View Village: \$40,000 public; \$700,00 private.

Vermilion: (as reported by the Erie county engineer's office): \$100,000 public; \$500,000 private.

On Pelee Island, officials said newspaper storm damage reports were greatly exaggerated and that only about 10 or 12 cottages had been damaged.

He said many Lorain Countians were on the island today checking properties there.

If the counties are declared disaster areas — as expected — the Small Business Administration will make loans available to home owners and businesses.

And other federal officials will make grants to the affected governments.

Gilligan could offer no assurances on how long it would take to get money from the federal government. He said that the telegram to Nixon had been sent "within the past few hours", but said that since the disaster plan is a federal program, "we can urge them to respond quickly, but we can't do much more than that."

Gen. Dana Stewart, adjutant general for the state, said there has been "a small amount" of looting in the area, but that no estimates were available.

Both Stewart and Gilligan noted that contrary to some reports, marshal law had not been declared in the disaster area. "In no sense of the word," said Gilligan, had the military taken over.

(See: "Sandusky returning to normal," Page 21; "Port Clinton residents remember 'Night of Fear.'" — Page 7.)