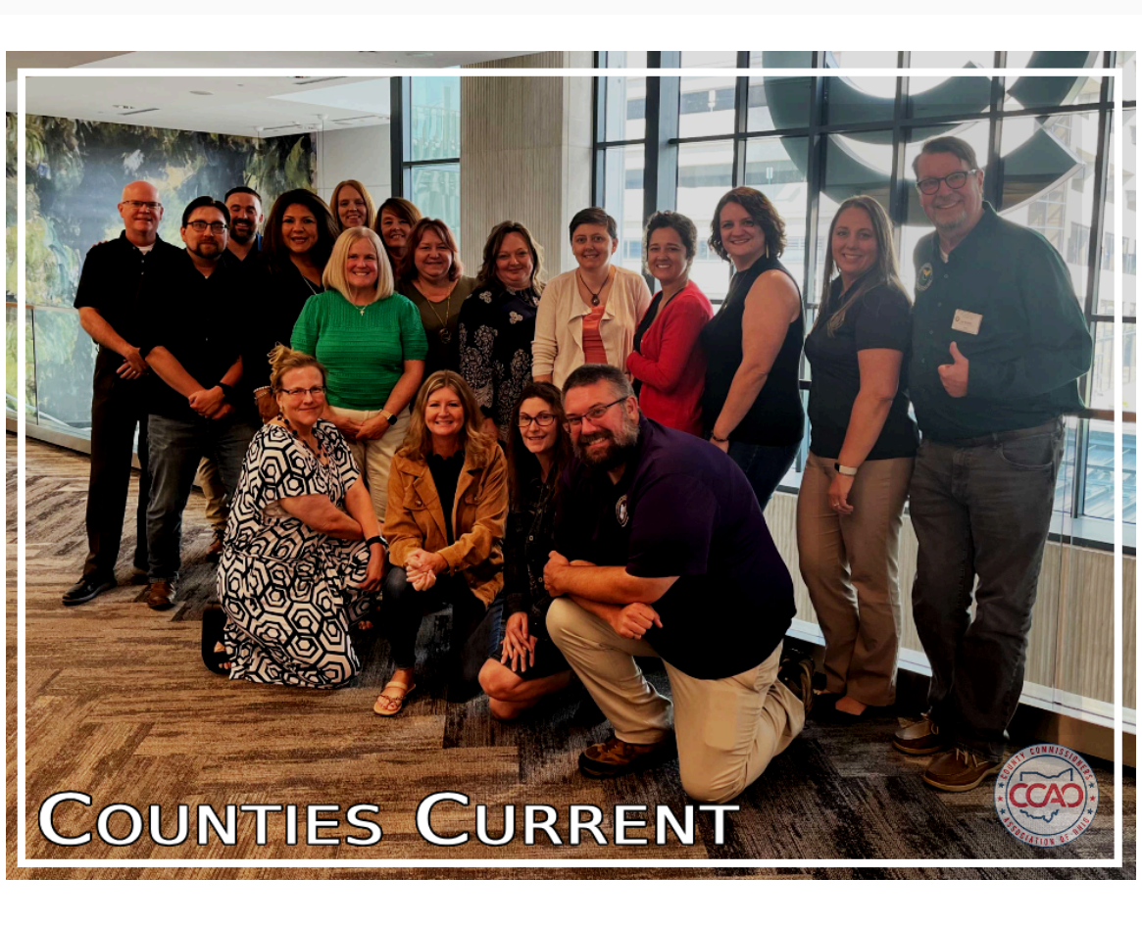


September 23, 2024

CCAO and CEAO staff joined Lucas County Engineer Mike Pniewski and Lucas County Commissioner Anita Lopez for the County Commissioners' Clerks & Engineers' Administrative Professionals Association meeting last week in Lucas County.

Association and Member News | State and Federal News |
Education and Grants | County News |
Job Postings

Statehouse Report and Counties Current Archive | Dates to Remember

---

ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

Back to Top

FINAL WEEK: All county staff MUST complete mandatory fraud reporting training

All county commissioners, executives, council members, other county elected officials and all current county staff are required to complete a new, mandatory fraud reporting training through the Auditor of State's office by ***THIS SATURDAY***, **September 28, 2024**.

The training is a free, 8-minute video that is available on demand on the Auditor of State's website. Each elected official and county employee will register, watch the video, and then receive a certificate of completion. All certificates should be collected from employees and retained for audit.

Elected officials are unable to delegate this training to another employee and must complete the training themselves.

Any new county employees hired after September 28, 2024, must take the training within 30 days of the first day of employment and all elected officials must take the training within 30 days after taking office. The requirement is ongoing and training must be completed once every four years.

The Auditor of State website includes FAQs and sample tools for tracking employee participation.

If you have questions regarding the training, you can contact the Auditor of State's office here.

Stepping Up Initiative coordinator survey reminder, due by October 11

As many of you know, the Stepping Up initiative has been active in Ohio since 2015. During this time, the initiative has worked to reduce the number of people with mental illness in Ohio's jails. As with any program, they are continually looking to evaluate and improve the program in the state. To that end, they are currently working on an updated evaluation of the program. The last evaluation occurred in 2021, when 54 counties participated in the initiative.

Today, over 60 Ohio counties are involved with the initiative, and this evaluation will help determine the program's impact in all participating counties and help the staff determine what services and resources are still needed going forward.

The survey was sent directly to your Stepping Up County Coordinator; ***only they can respond***. The link above contains the contact information for each county coordinator, so please follow up with them if you have any questions.

It is important to note that your Stepping Up County Coordinator will require assistance and information from several members of your County Stepping Up Committee, if you have one, including staff from your jail, Common Pleas Court, Municipal Court, Probate Court, treatment providers, housing providers, and mental health and substance abuse services board.

We have linked a copy of the Stepping Up 2024 questionnaire to facilitate the gathering of information from the persons who represent their respective areas, as noted above. Specifically, there are the following number of questions covering these topics:

- 13 general questions
- 29 questions geared towards jail and/or law enforcement
- 4 questions for the Municipal and Common Pleas Courts and probation
- 3 Probate Court questions
- 7 questions on the crisis continuum
- 9 questions on projects, improvements, and challenges

The questionnaire must be completed by Friday, October 11. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Melissa Burek at mwburek@bgsu.edu or 419-372-9542.

If you are not a Stepping Up County and are interested in learning more about the initiative, please contact CCAO Managing Director of Policy Kyle Petty at kpetty@ccao.org or Stepping Up Ohio Project Director Eve Stratton at evelyn_stratton@yahoo.com.

Ohio drought: Expanded open burn ban issued

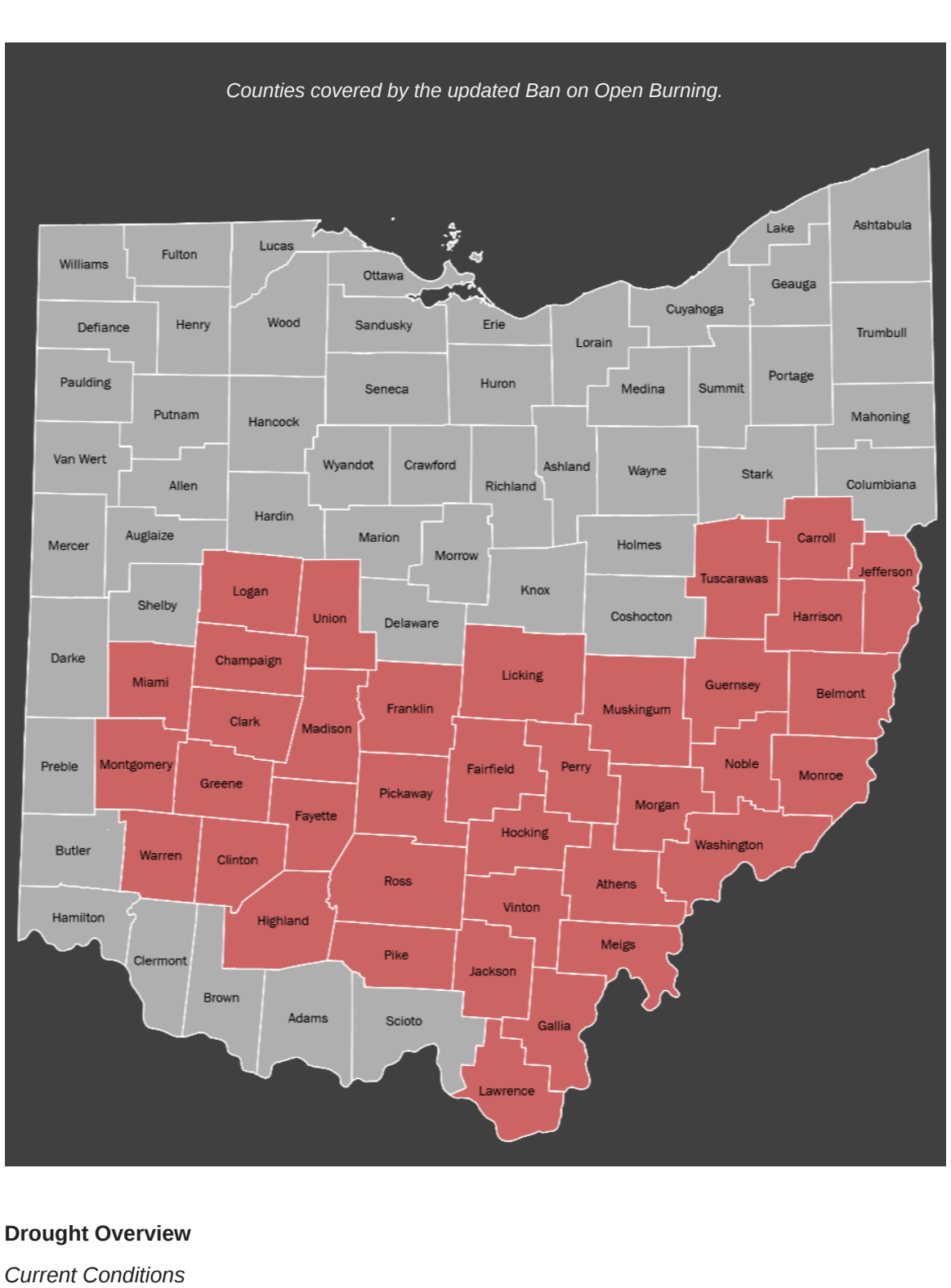
Much of Ohio has been suffering from a drought since mid-June. This article will first provide two items of recent news concerning the drought, then highlight resources offered to hard-hit areas, and finally provide an overview of conditions across the state.

Recent News
Open Burning Ban Expansion
On Friday, the Ohio Fire Marshal issued an updated Ban on Open Burning effective immediately for counties designated as Extreme Drought or Exceptional Drought (more information regarding these designations can be found in the Overview section).

The ban prohibits the following outdoor actions: lighting and/or maintaining a fire at any location, smoking (be it cigarettes, similar items, or as part of a cooking process), non-electric cooking (any fuel source), using fireworks, discarding lighted materials (such as matches or cigarettes), campfires, bonfires, live fire training events, flame effect-based displays, and using spark-causing devices.

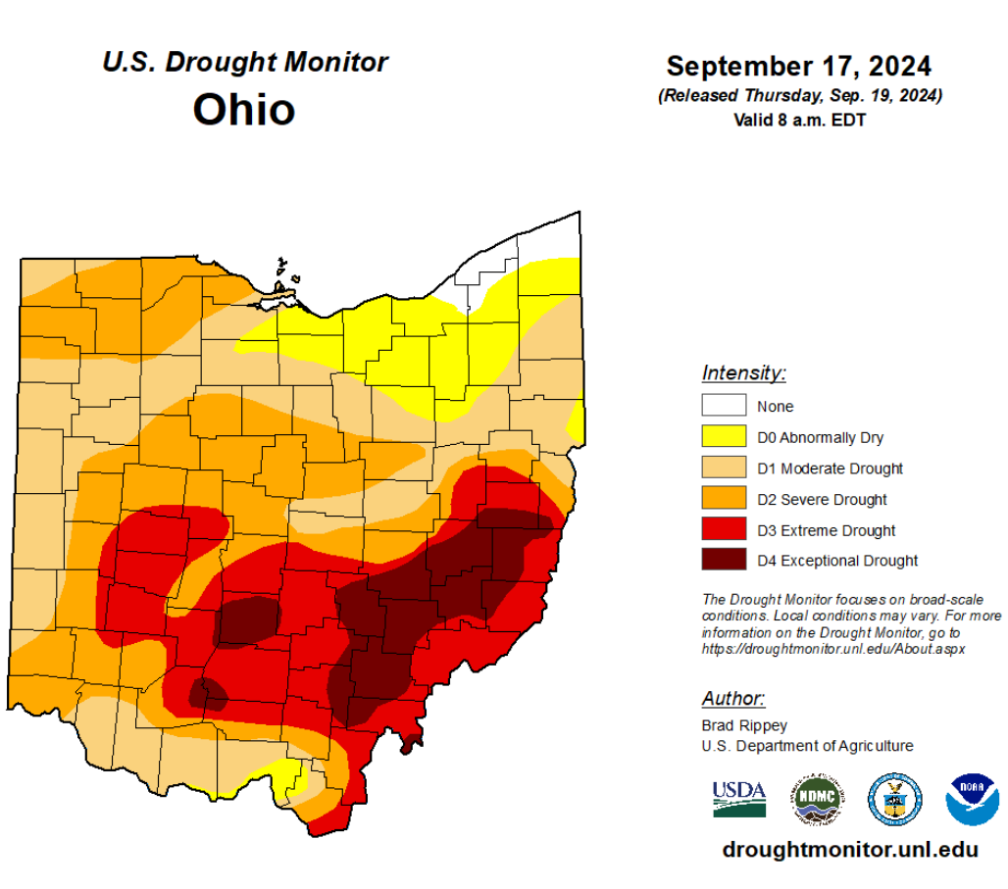
Violations of the ban are punishable by civil penalties and the existing criminal penalty for negligently causing fires to spread to any structure, field, or wooded lot.

The affected counties are presented below.



Drought Overview
Current Conditions
Ohio's drought began in mid-June. As of September 17, only 2.1% of the state is not currently in drought conditions compared to 4.8% the prior week. Not only has the area experiencing the drought expanded, but conditions have worsened statewide. The percentage of Ohio in drought conditions 3 and 4 (extreme drought and exceptional drought) increased from 24.3% to 30.1%.

The USDM estimates that only about 646,600 Ohioans live in a drought-free area, leaving the remaining 10.9 million affected by the drought.


U.S. Drought Monitor
Ohio
September 17, 2024
(Released Thursday, Sep. 19, 2024)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT
Intensity:
None
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx
Author:
Brad Rippey
U.S. Department of Agriculture
USDA
NDMC
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Northwest District Meeting to be held in Henry County on October 16

On October 16, the CCAO-CEAO Northwest District will host a meeting in Henry County.

The meeting will have guest speakers from New Vision Farms, a conglomeration of family farms, and Graminex, a farm science company that extracts natural nutrients from pollen grains.

Registration for the event is $25 per person, with checks made payable to the Northwest Ohio Commissioners and Engineers Association. To register, complete this form and send it to Henry County Clerk Kristi Schultheis at kristi.schultheis@henrycountyohio.gov no later than October 1.

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

JobsOhio
Ohio's Economic Development Corporation

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

Back to Top

Attorney General Opinion requested regarding legal representation for joint-county juvenile rehabilitation centers

Attorney General Dave Yost recently accepted an Opinion Request from the Greene County Prosecutor concerning legal representation for joint-county juvenile rehabilitation centers established under R.C. 2151.65.

The legal representation for the Miami Valley Juvenile Rehabilitation Center (MVJRC), which serves ten counties but is located in Green County, is in question. The MVJRC was created by a contract between the involved counties and is overseen by a governing board of juvenile court judges from each county.

The request comes due to Attorney General Opinion 83-064, which determined that county prosecutors have no duty to provide legal counsel to entities created under R.C. 2151.65 since the entity is not strictly a "county board," nor are its officers "county officers." Greene County's request asks if AGO 83-064 still holds.

CCAO will keep members informed when the Attorney General issues its opinion.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

Back to Top

Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.

CCAO, Ohio REALTORS, and BrickerGraydon to host Fairfield County housing forum in October; Save the Dates for two future events

On October 18, BrickerGraydon, Ohio REALTORS, and CCAO will host a collaborative discussion on the future of housing in Ohio. The event will be held at the Wigwam Event Center in Pickerington and is free, but space is limited. Registration will close on October 11.

The program will feature speakers such as Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Fairfield County Commissioner Jeff Fix, CEO of One Columbus Kenny McDonald, and others.

Registration for the event can be completed here.

Details for two additional events are still being finalized, but the dates and host county are listed below.

- November 1 - Portage County (Northeast Ohio audience)
- November 13 - Ross County (Southern Ohio audience)

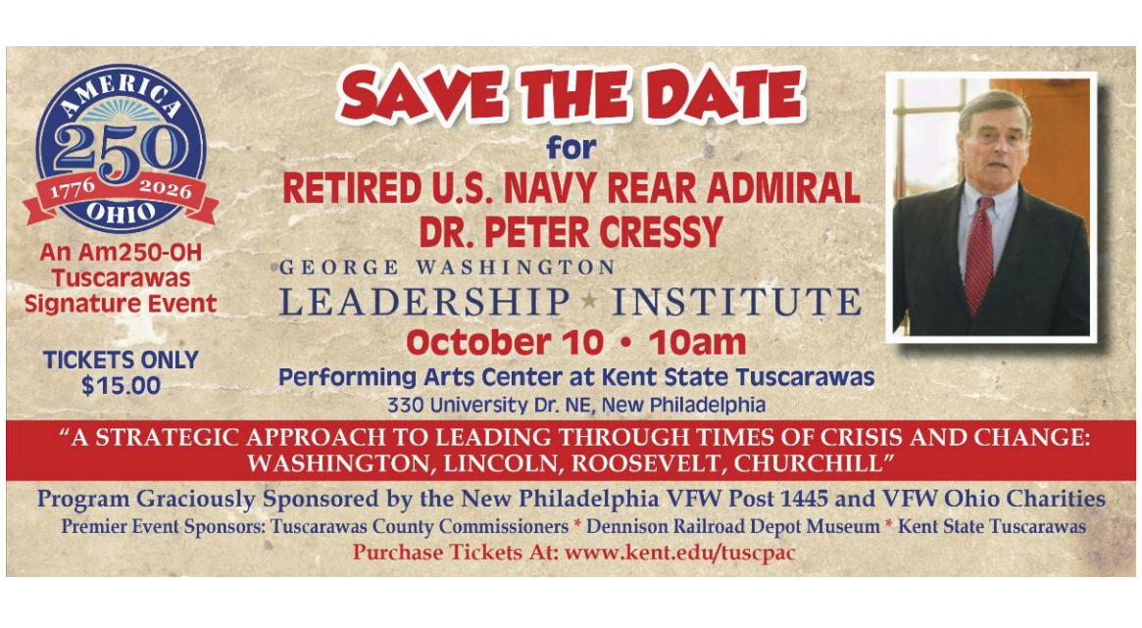
As times and venues are cemented, CCAO will circulate registration information through e-blasts and Counties Current.

Tuscarawas County to host event with Rear Admiral Peter Cressy as part of America 250-Ohio celebration

On October 10, Tuscarawas County, in partnership with the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum and Kent State University Tuscarawas, will be hosting an America 250 event featuring retired US Navy Rear Admiral Dr. Peter Cressy of the George Washington Leadership Institute.

Dr. Cressy spoke at the 2023 CCAO / CEAO Winter Conference and received rave reviews from attendees. The Tuscarawas County event is an opportunity to hear him speak again, this time to a more general audience.

The event will take place at the Performing Arts Center at Kent State Tuscarawas at 10:00 a.m. on October 10. Tickets cost $15 and can be purchased here.



SAVE THE DATE
for
RETIRED U.S. NAVY REAR ADMIRAL
DR. PETER CRESSY
GEORGE WASHINGTON
LEADERSHIP ★ INSTITUTE
October 10 • 10am
Performing Arts Center at Kent State Tuscarawas
330 University Dr. NE, New Philadelphia
"A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO LEADING THROUGH TIMES OF CRISIS AND CHANGE: WASHINGTON, LINCOLN, ROOSEVELT, CHURCHILL"
Program Graciously Sponsored by the New Philadelphia VFW Post 1445 and VFW Ohio Charities
Premier Event Sponsors: Tuscarawas County Commissioners * Dennison Railroad Depot Museum * Kent State Tuscarawas
Purchase Tickets At: www.kent.edu/tuscpac

AMERICA 250 1776 2026 OHIO
An Am250-OH Tuscarawas Signature Event
TICKETS ONLY $15.00

Low-interest loan programs available to drought-affected areas

On September 4, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) announced that emergency assistance programs are open to Ohio counties.

Under the USDA Emergency Farm Loan Program, producers who have suffered farm-related losses directly caused by a declared disaster or designated disaster area may qualify for emergency loans. To qualify, applicants must be established family farm operators and have suffered at least a 30% loss in crop production or physical loss to livestock or associated property. Applicants can receive the lesser of the actual production or physical losses or $500,000.

Under the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, eligible farm-related and nonfarm-related entities suffering financial losses can apply for up to a $2 million loan. Interest rates are 4% for businesses and 3.25% for private nonprofit organizations, and terms are up to 30 years. These loans ***are not available*** to agricultural producers, farmers, or ranchers.

CCAO encourages affected counties to share information about these programs with farmers and small businesses in their communities to help them weather the effects of the ongoing drought.

COUNTY NEWS

Back to Top

Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One story from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

Breathing bags help overdose victims in Erie County

WEWS, September 19, 2024

The Erie County Health Department is continues to do its part to tackle the opioid crisis in Erie County. Employees recently distributed around 600 artificial manual breathing unit bags to first responders.

"For the first time, especially coming out of COVID, it went the wrong way. We're starting to get it back into control again," Assistant Health Commissioner Trey Hardy said.

These bags will allow first responders to resuscitate people who are in cardiac arrest or who have overdosed.

"We patrol a lot of rural areas of the county, so it can be several minutes before an ambulance gets to a scene, and we have had many situations where we have had to perform CPR for many minutes before an ambulance gets to the scene," Erie County Sherif Paul Sigsworth said.

Sigsworth says this will give officers —who are usually first on scene— the opportunity to provide the maximum amount of air in every single breath and stabilize overdose victims until an ambulance arrives.

The health department also provided officers with medical tools in what they call Ambu bags. The bags include chest seals, bandages, trauma scissors, gloves and other supplies that allow officers to help victims.

Northeast District

Lorain County's new microtransit program aims to address mobility gaps by providing on-demand rides

IdeaStream, September 16, 2024

The government of Lorain County teamed up with the tech company Via this summer to launch a microtransit pilot program.

The program hopes to fill in some of the transit gaps in the cities of Lorain and Elyria.

Those transit gaps include obstacles people face like a bus route not being close to home, or not close enough to a destination. A lot of vulnerable populations like the elderly or disabled often face these transit gaps that can impact their ability to get to work.

Officials in Lorain County have said that this new Via Lorain County program has been a success, with thousands of individuals using the service so far.

Central District

Logan County to Build New Animal Shelter; Donations Being Accepted Through Sheriff's Office 'Behind the Badge' Program to Support Project

WKTN, September 18, 2024

The Dog Warden of Logan County will be getting a new animal shelter.

The Logan County Sheriff's Office has announced that the Logan County Commissioners have designated the Logan County Sheriff's Office 'BEHIND THE BADGE Volunteers, Inc.', a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, to accept financial donations.

Contributions can be made in a variety of ways including cash donations, checks, and credit card donations.

– **Cash Donations**: Drop off at the Sheriff's Office, 284 County Road 32 S, Bellefontaine, OH 43311, during regular business hours (8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.).

– **Checks:** Mail to the above address.

– **Credit Card Donations:** Contact Pam Reames at 937-539-0403 or via email at pnp5us@icloud.com.

They will be holding a ceremonial groundbreaking event on September 27th at 1:00pm. The event will take place on the jail grounds.

Southwest District

Clermont County Animal Shelter still in need of help, low-risk inmates filling positions

Local 12, September 19, 2024

Clermont County's Animal Shelter needs help.

Staffing has been a revolving door, but now the shelter is getting some help from what you might consider an unexpected place.

The permanent openings are still posted, but low-risk inmates from the county jail are helping cover some of the workload. The low-risk inmates are filling open vet tech positions.

Commissioner (R)-David Painter said that it's a solution to free up the staff to focus on caring for the dogs.

"What that does is that it frees up the regular staff that works there full time to be able to do all the other things that can enhance the quality of the life that canines spend in the animal shelter," Painter said.

The sheriff's trustee program already provides janitorial services for county office buildings and maintenance help, but Painter said that this is the first time it's working with the shelter. It could be a permanent solution, but that would be up to Sheriff Leahy.

Southeast District

Chavez, Jones visit Belmont County

Times Leader, September 19, 2024

Ohio Sen. Brian Chavez and state Rep. Don Jones visited the Belmont County Board of Commissioners meeting Wednesday to discuss Capital Budget Bill funding awarded to Sargus Juvenile Detention Center to improve bathroom facilities at the center.

The Capital Bill is money set aside by the state to go back into local communities. Eastern Ohio projects looking for Capital Bill funding submit applications to both Jones' and Chazev's offices to be considered. For a project to be selected, it has to be a bondable project that can be tied to a state agency, and Sargus met both qualifications.

"That facility serves both Belmont and Harrison counties, which are in my district as well as the senator's district. But more importantly, it's something that was really needed," Jones said, adding that he believes the responsibility to update the facility shouldn't fall on the commissioners because the county's budget is tight. "It all comes down to what the senator and I can convince our financial teams in Columbus that we need. And we don't always get what we want — we've had some asks for a million dollars and we may have only had half a million or $400,000, but sometimes that's enough to get the ball rolling.

"Nobody wants to be the first dollars going into a project. They would like to be the last dollars, especially for grants."

He noted that it's difficult to figure out which projects are going to meet the greatest needs and that he sympathizes with individuals who put time and energy into a project that isn't able to secure the funding.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

Back to Top

SEPTEMBER 27
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

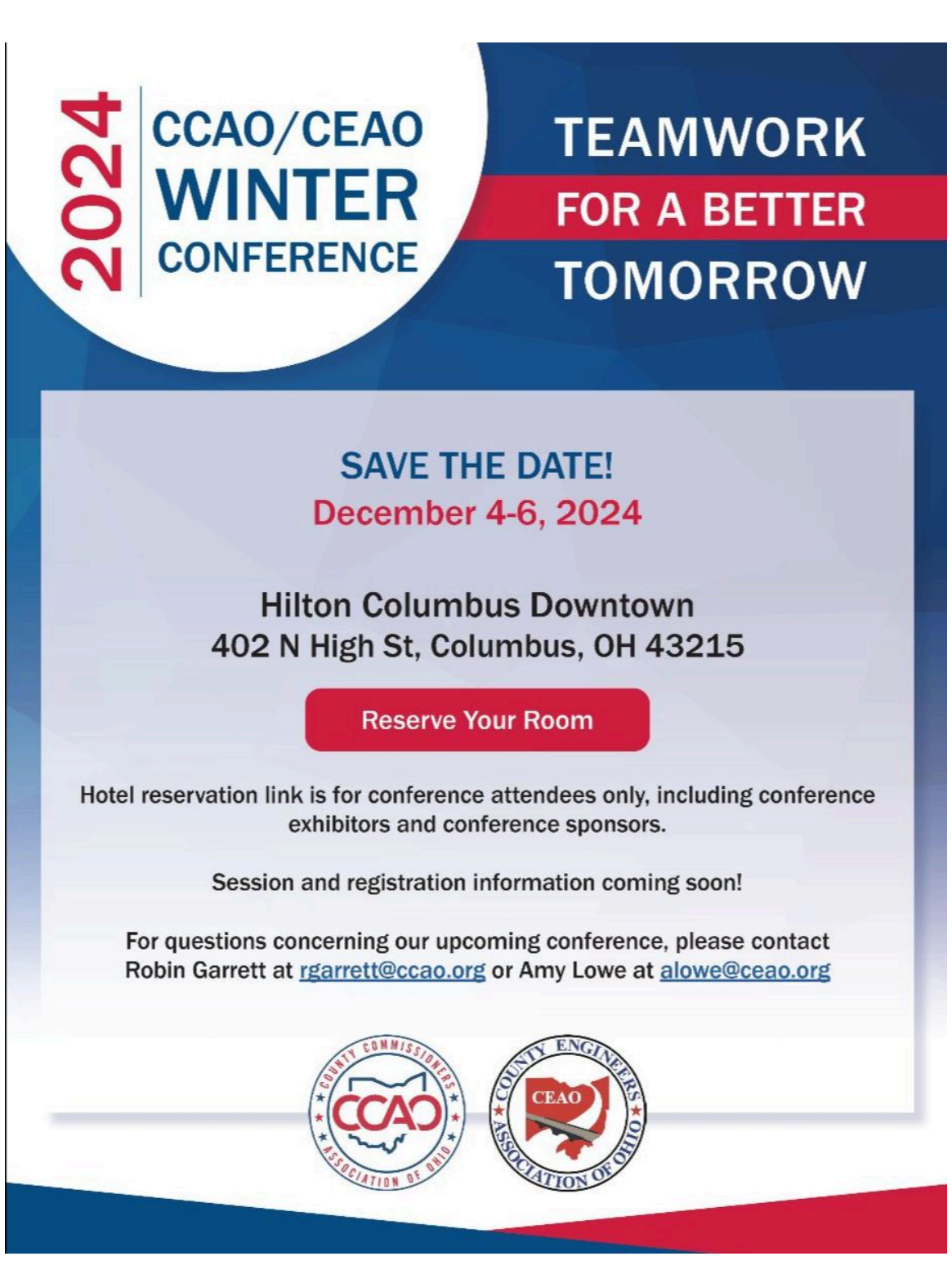
BY SEPTEMBER 28
County elected officials and employees must take Fraud Reporting training

OCTOBER 4
Central District Meeting - Champaign County

OCTOBER 14
Columbus Day - Legal Holiday

NOVEMBER 12
OCCO Legislative Reception

DECEMBER 4 - 6
CCAO / CEAO Winter Conference



2024 CCAO/CEAO WINTER CONFERENCE
TEAMWORK FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

SAVE THE DATE!
December 4-6, 2024

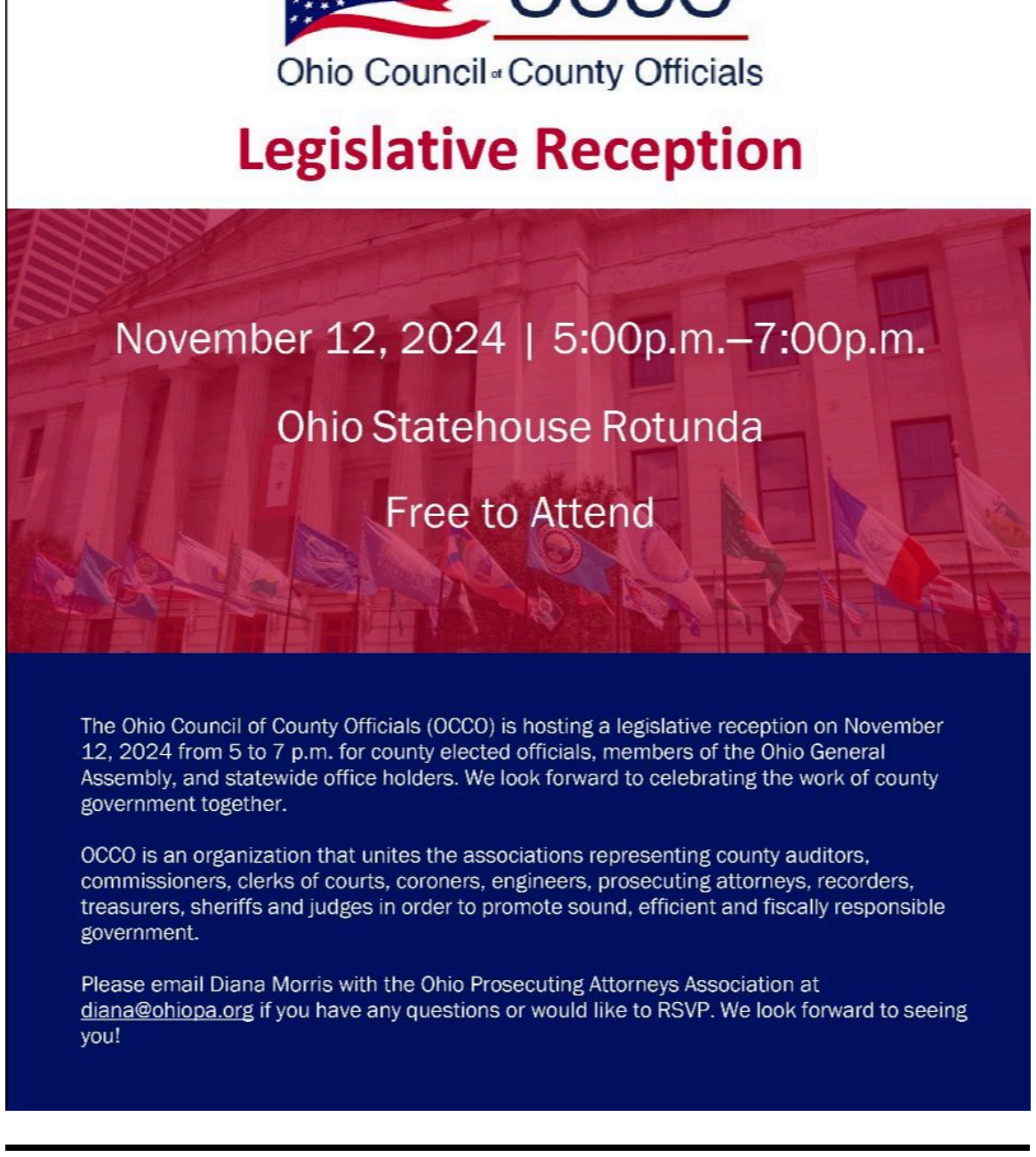
Hilton Columbus Downtown
402 N High St, Columbus, OH 43215

Reserve Your Room

Hotel reservation link is for conference attendees only, including conference exhibitors and conference sponsors.

Session and registration information coming soon!

For questions concerning our upcoming conference, please contact Robin Garrett at rgarrett@ccao.org or Amy Lowe at alowe@ceao.org



Save the Date!
OCCO
Ohio Council of County Officials
Legislative Reception

November 12, 2024 | 5:00p.m.–7:00p.m.
Ohio Statehouse Rotunda
Free to Attend

The Ohio Council of County Officials (OCCO) is hosting a legislative reception on November 12, 2024 from 5 to 7 p.m. for county elected officials, members of the Ohio General Assembly, and statewide office holders. We look forward to celebrating the work of county government together.

OCCO is an organization that unites the associations representing county auditors, commissioners, clerks of courts, coroners, engineers, prosecuting attorneys, recorders, treasurers, sheriffs and judges in order to promote sound, efficient and fiscally responsible government.

Please email Diana Morris with the Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys Association at diana@ohiopa.org if you have any questions or would like to RSVP. We look forward to seeing you!

Copyright © 2024 CCAO, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.