View this email in your browser

CCAO Members Urge Yes on State Issue 2

February 18, 2025

On May 6, Ohioans will have the opportunity to renew one of the most popular and successful state programs, the State Capital Improvement Program of the Public Works Commission. CCAO strongly encourages a Yes vote to ensure that infrastructure programs across the state get the funding they need.

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

Public Works reauthorization on May ballot as Issue 2

Earlier this week, the Ohio Ballot Board certified the Ohio Public Works renewal for the May 6 ballot as Issue 2. The CCAO Board of Directors unanimously endorsed the renewal at its January meeting. Issue 2 will allow the issuance of general obligation bonds up to $250 million per year over 10 years to fund local infrastructure improvements across Ohio and will create an estimated 35,000 construction jobs. Issue 2 relies on existing state revenues and does not raise taxes.

Since Ohio voters first approved the program in 1987, it has provided funding for more than 19,000 critical infrastructure projects and upgrades to local roads and bridges, wastewater treatment systems, water supply systems, solid waste disposal facilities and storm water and sanitary collection, storage, and treatment facilities across all 88 counties. In the current 10-year cycle, $2.3 billion has been awarded to 1,084 local governments for 4,490 projects benefiting cities, counties, townships and other subdivisions across the state.

CCAO to host legislative reception in Statehouse Atrium on February 25

As a part of this year's New Member Training event, CCAO is hosting a reception in the Statehouse Atrium on Tuesday, February 25, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. ***Registration is not required*** for the reception, but we do ask that if you plan on attending the reception, please RSVP to CCAO Board's Liaison and Events Manager Robin Garrett at rgarrett@ccao.org.

Social Security Administration releases FAQs on Social Security Fairness Act

The Social Security Administration released Frequently Asked Questions on its website regarding the implementation of the Social Security Fairness Act. The Act, signed into law last month by President Biden, ends the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in Social Security.

December 2023 is the last month that WEP and GPO will apply. This means that those rules no longer apply to benefits payable for January 2024 and later.

The webpage states: "SSA is finalizing its plan to implement the Act while limiting negative effects on our regular workloads and services to the public. We cannot yet provide an estimated timeframe for when we will adjust a person's past or future benefits, but we will continue to provide updates on this webpage. We thank the public for its patience."

To view the FAQs, click here.

CCAO will continue to update members as we receive additional updates.

CCAO hiring Communications Coordinator

CCAO is seeking to fill the position of Communications Coordinator!

The position is responsible for the coordination of external and internal communication supporting the strategic direction of CCAO and its entities. The position will plan, write, design and layout communication pieces and social media; produce and edit short videos and podcasts; maintain CCAO and its entities websites; develop and implement media outreach and educational strategies; monitor media outlets for mentions of CCAO and its entities; take and edit photographs at events.

You can access the full job description here.

Please submit letter of interest, resume, references, writing samples and, if applicable, portfolio to CCAO Outreach & Member Engagement Manager Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org by close of business Wednesday, February 26, 2025.

A Special Thanks to our Pinnacle Partner

sedgwick®

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

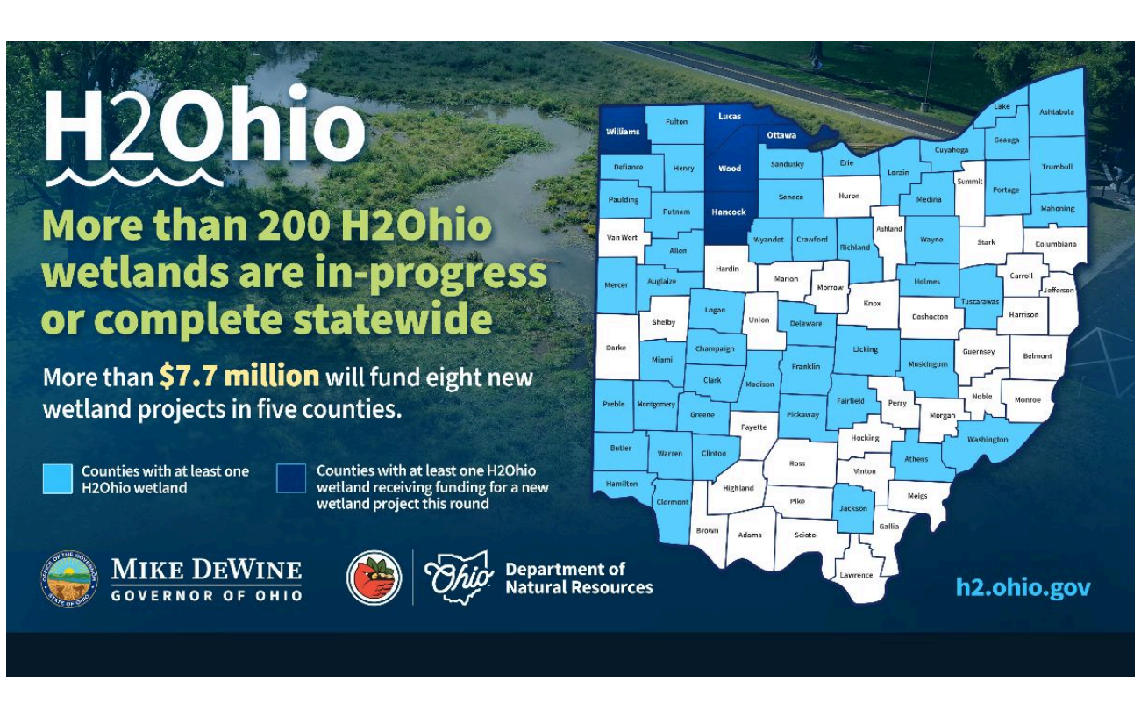
Back to Top

Latest round of H2Ohio wetlands support brings total project count north of 200

Last week, Governor Mike DeWine and Director of Natural Resources Mary Mertz announced eight new wetland projects through H2Ohio, bringing the total statewide project count to 203.

The eight new projects are all in the Western Lake Erie Basin, which is the focus of 105 total wetlands projects funded through H2Ohio. The projects, which received $7.7 million in state funding, are in Hancock, Lucas, Ottawa, Williams, and Wood counties.

In total, 55 counties have at least one H2Ohio-supported wetland.


H2Ohio
More than 200 H2Ohio wetlands are in-progress or complete statewide
More than $7.7 million will fund eight new wetland projects in five counties.
Counties with at least one H2Ohio wetland
Counties with at least one H2Ohio wetland receiving funding for a new wetland project this round
MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
h2.ohio.gov

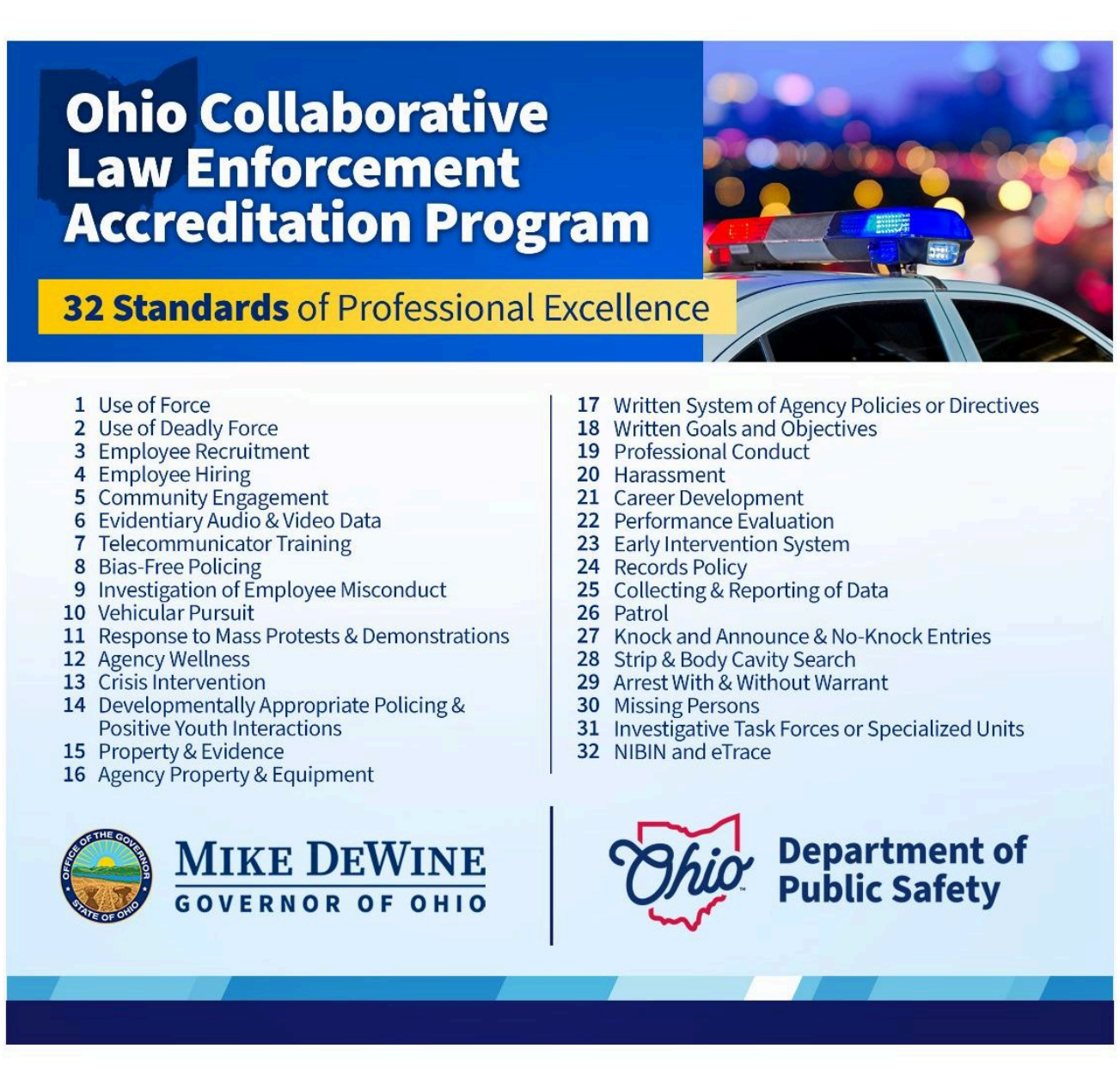
Three sheriff's offices receive new accreditation recognition

Last year, Governor Mike DeWine launched the new Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Accreditation Program to recognize law enforcement agencies that meet or exceed 32 standards ranging from professional conduct, bias-free policing, crisis intervention, and community engagement. The full list is below.

Last week, the Governor announced the first ten agencies to receive the accreditation. The first class includes three sheriff's offices: Mahoning County, Stark County, and Van Wert County.

More information about the accreditation program, including how to seek accreditation and more details about the standards, is available on the Office of Criminal Justice Services' website.

Congratulations to Mahoning, Stark, and Van Wert counties!



Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Accreditation Program

32 Standards of Professional Excellence

1 Use of Force
2 Use of Deadly Force
3 Employee Recruitment
4 Employee Hiring
5 Community Engagement
6 Evidentiary Audio & Video Data
7 Telecommunicator Training
8 Bias-Free Policing
9 Investigation of Employee Misconduct
10 Vehicular Pursuit
11 Response to Mass Protests & Demonstrations
12 Agency Wellness
13 Crisis Intervention
14 Developmentally Appropriate Policing & Positive Youth Interactions
15 Property & Evidence
16 Agency Property & Equipment
17 Written System of Agency Policies or Directives
18 Written Goals and Objectives
19 Professional Conduct
20 Harassment
21 Career Development
22 Performance Evaluation
23 Early Intervention System
24 Records Policy
25 Collecting & Reporting of Data
26 Patrol
27 Knock and Announce & No-Knock Entries
28 Strip & Body Cavity Search
29 Arrest With & Without Warrant
30 Missing Persons
31 Investigative Task Forces or Specialized Units
32 NIBIN and eTrace

MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

Ohio Department of Public Safety

Auditor of State releases historical cost of capital assets bulletin

Last week, Auditor of State Keith Faber released AOS Bulletin 2025-002, Estimating Historical Costs of Capital Assets Using the Consumer Price Index. Political subdivisions that utilize the Generally Accepted Accounting Principals system may have to calculate the historic cost of a capital asset. The bulletin is a brief guide on how to do so.

information in this Bulletin, please contact the Local Government Services staff of the Auditor of State's Office at (800) 345-2519 or contactLGS@ohioauditor.gov.

Intergovernmental Affairs contacts for Trump Administration named

The Intergovernmental Affairs contacts for key federal agencies under the Trump Administration have been named. These are the initial point of contact if you need to get in touch with a federal agency or department.

- Department of Transportation: Hannah Matesic (hannah.matesic@dot.gov)
- Housing and Urban Development: Colleen O'Kane (Colleen.M.OKane@hud.gov)
- Department of the Interior: Daniel Gustafson (daniel_gustafson@ios.doi.gov)
- Department of Labor: Wayne Palmer (palmer.wayne.d@dol.gov)
- General Services Administration: Frank Schuler (frank.schuler@gsa.gov)
- Office of Personnel Management: Christina Bonarrigo (Christina.Bonarrigo@opm.gov)
- Department of Defense: Isabella D'Antonio (Isabella.l.dantonio.civ@mail.mil)
- Environmental Protection Agency: Sarah Talmage (talmage.sarah@epa.gov)
- Department of Education: Steve Warzoha (Stephen.Warzoha@ed.gov)
- Department of Energy: Shawn Affolter (Shawn.affolter@hq.doe.gov)
- Department of Homeland Security: Sarah Perkins (sara.perkins@hq.dhs.gov)
- White House: Christine Serrano Glassner (Christine.Glassner@who.eop.gov)

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

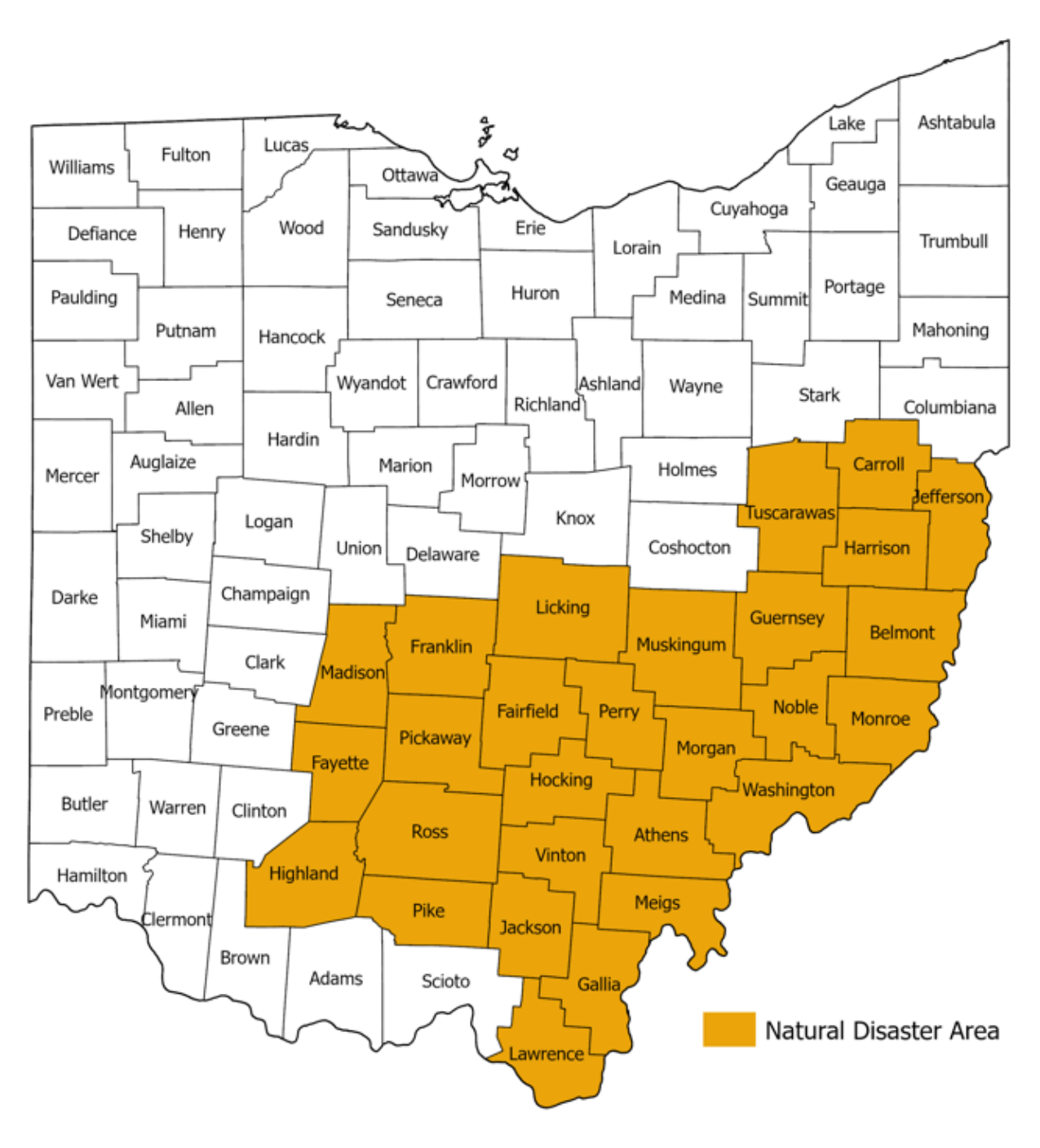
Back to Top

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

Drought assistant funding available to 28 counties

Drought assistance funds are available through the Ohio Department of Agriculture to help farmers recover from 2024 drought. $10 million is available for farmers in 28 counties (see the map below) and is available to both crop farmers and livestock producers.

The application period closes on April 1. The program will primarily be administered through soil and water conservation districts, so the Department of Agriculture encourages farmers to reach out to their SWCD to discuss eligibility and how to apply.



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

Courts moving to new building

Review Times, February 10, 2025

Hancock County Juvenile and Probate courts will be operating in the new $20.8 million Allan H. Davis Judicial Center, on West Main Cross Street, starting Monday.

Furniture and other items were moved in recent days from the Dorney Plaza offices to the 47,000-square foot, three-story building, County Commissioner Timothy Bechtol said.

When Juvenile/Probate Judge Kristen Johnson first took the bench in 2015, she inherited a court building already deemed unsuitable by the Ohio Supreme Court in 2014. It was Johnson's predecessor, then Juvenile/Probate Judge Allan Davis — the namesake of the new building — who enlisted the high court's assessment. Everyone agreed the existing building, at the southeast corner of Main Cross and Cory streets, needed to be replaced. It was originally built as a church in 1865. Figuring out the right way to replace it involved years of debates and false starts.

But the building now is completed. Elevator, communications and other systems have all passed inspections. Court will soon be in session in the new building.

In addition to housing Juvenile and Probate courts and Juvenile Probation offices, the building will house Adult Probation, offices for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates for children), Family & Children First Council, Great Lakes Guardianship Services Board, and Domestic Relations Court.

Northeast District

Stark County takes next step toward major jail renovation

Morning Journal, February 12, 2025

County commissioners have authorized the next big step in the Stark County Jail renovation project.

The three-member board met Monday for a work session to discuss plans for the major renovation project, which is expected to cost $80 million to $85 million.

At the county commissioners meeting Wednesday, the board agreed to authorize the architect to finalize construction design plans and authorize the construction manager to go forward on those plans.

"We're nearing the end of the beginning," County Administrator Brant Luther said.

The next step is for the architect and construction manager to finalize design plans and come up with a maximum project price for commissioners to approve.

The county is utilizing Ohio's construction manager-at-risk legislation that puts the responsibility for cost overruns on the construction manager. The construction manager for the jail project is a joint venture between Granger Construction Co. of Columbus and Welty Building Co. LTD of Fairlawn.

The county has been discussing plans for the jail renovation since August 2022. The project includes a new two-story pod-style housing unit and expansion of the jail's kitchen and clinic.

Central District

Richland County Job & Family Services shares $185K reconfiguration project

Richland Source, February 11, 2025

Lori Bedson said she wants to make Richland County Job & Family Services more inviting.

Bedson, director of RCJFS, said recent walks through the Park Avenue East building have revealed several areas requiring maintenance attention.

"We've noticed some walls that are crumbling a little bit around the base of the wall," she told Richland County commissioners Tuesday morning.

"Our carpeting has been down in the building for about 10 years, 11 years now and there are big spots," Bedson said.

Additionally, issues with mold and mildew have occurred after carpet cleanings, she said.

Bedson, along with Jason McManes, administrator at RCJFS, joined commissioners Tuesday to present a reconfiguration project proposal, including a request for a 15-percent match of the total cost.

Day-to-day operations at RCJFS have changed, Bedson said.

The total number of employees has decreased from 125 to about 50 over the past 18 years.

"We're never going to be at 125 again," Bedson said. "We have a lot of dead space, unused space in our main building."

Increased use of online systems and telephone contact has created growth in the organization's intake department. Its also sparked a need for more space for support staff and ancillary services, and limited space for face-to-face interactions with customers.

Southwest District

Clinton County Resource Center provides updates at commissioners' meeting

Wilmington News Journal, February 10, 2025

At Monday morning's Clinton County Commissioners' meeting, the Clinton County Resource Center (CCRC) provided an update on its services and impact in the community. Director Andrew Conarroe led the discussion, delivering a slideshow presentation and playing a video showcasing the center's achievements since its opening in 2023.

The Clinton County Resource Center is part of a statewide initiative aimed at addressing the issue of low-level youth offenses going through the court system without success. Instead of placing these youth through the formal juvenile justice process, the state implemented diversion centers in select counties, allowing young individuals to participate in rehabilitative programs.

"We've had a surprising impact on a lot of the youth we serve. It's been both exciting and challenging along the way," Conarroe shared. The initiative initially began with just four counties, but the success of the program has led to 17 centers across Ohio, with four more on the way.

The center operates on state funding from the Department of Youth Services, including Competitive RECLAIM and subsidy grant dollars, in addition to community grants. One such grant recently allowed the center to provide free snack bags for local youth Monday through Friday, ensuring that no child goes without access to food. The program, spearheaded by Carrie Cunningham, has seen great success in the community, as explained by Conarroe.

One of the highlights of Conarroe's presentation was a story about a youth who first came to the center due to truancy issues. Over time, the center helped the individual engage in pro-social activities, which provide youth with positive, structured experiences to develop social and life skills. Now, the same individual attends programming three days a week and would attend even more if given the opportunity. Recently, they were nominated and won a C4 Award, a recognition for youth who demonstrate commitment to personal growth and community involvement.

Southeast District

State-Mandated Reassessments Lead To Skyrocketing Property Bills in Belmont County

The Intelligencer, February 10, 2025

Belmont County Auditor Cindi Henry understands why residents are concerned about their property tax bills, and she and her staff are ready to help them seek relief.

Henry acknowledged that some residents' tax bills for the first half of the year are much higher than they were at the beginning of 2024. In a few cases, she said, those charges increased by 40-50% or even more. But the increase is not due to the addition of new levies or a change in the rate of taxation — instead it stems from newly determined property values.

In Ohio, county auditors must set new property values every six years. A reappraisal process is conducted in which each parcel is to be inspected and appraised for its market value. Tax bills are then based on the assessed values, which amount to 35% of the appraised values.

Rather than reassessing the entire state at one time, Ohio's 88 counties are organized into three groups that complete the process on a rotating cycle. Henry said Belmont County was one of 20 counties to base its tax bills on newly assessed values this year.

The total assessed value of all properties in Belmont County increased from $2,410,680,850 in 2023 to $2,772,928,250 in 2024 — an overall increase of more than $362 million.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

Back to Top

FEBRUARY 24 - 27
CCAO New Member Training
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting (February 25)

FEBRUARY 28
CEBCO Board of Directors Meeting

MARCH 1 - MARCH 4
NACo Legislative Conference (Washington D.C.)

MARCH 14
CORSA Board of Directors Meeting

MARCH 21
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

April 4
CEBCO Annual Business Meeting

Copyright © 2025 CCAO, All rights reserved.

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