

# NEWS RELEASE

**Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Date: August 7, 2024**

**Contact:** Greta Johnson  
Director of Communications and Assistant Chief of Staff  
Office of County Executive Shapiro  
[ExecutivePress@summitoh.net](mailto:ExecutivePress@summitoh.net)  
330-643-2656

## **Summit County Swiftwater Rescue Team deploying to North Carolina**

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**— Earlier today, Summit County's highly trained Type I Swiftwater Rescue Team deployed to North Carolina to assist with Tropical Storm Debby's response and rescue efforts. The hurricane turned tropical storm, which has already drenched Georgia and South Carolina, is expected to bring significant flooding and damage to North Carolina. The team, comprised of 14 skilled members from the Akron, Cuyahoga Falls, Green, and Twinsburg fire departments, will work alongside local first responders to conduct search, rescue, and recovery operations in affected areas.

"Summit County is fortunate to have specialized emergency response teams available to support our fellow Americans when they are in need. We thank the members of the Swiftwater team for volunteering their time and skills and wish them all the best as they travel to North Carolina," said County Executive Ilene Shapiro.

Summit County's Type I Swiftwater Team is the highest FEMA-typed team, equipped to handle the most challenging water rescue situations. Its deployment to North Carolina is a testament to rigorous training and preparedness. With specialized skills and extensive experience, the team is ready to face the challenges posed by the remnants of Tropical Storm Debby.

The Summit County Emergency Management Agency plays a crucial role in coordinating the deployment of this team. Working closely with the Ohio EMA, Summit County EMA ensures a seamless integration of resources and personnel during emergencies. The Ohio EMA is a liaison, negotiating with other states for additional resources and support when necessary. This coordination is part of a larger Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) framework.

EMAC is a mutual aid agreement among states, enabling them to share resources and personnel during disasters. It facilitates quick and efficient deployment of emergency response teams across state lines, ensuring that affected areas receive the necessary support as swiftly as possible. During disasters like Hurricane Debby, EMAC is instrumental in coordinating the response efforts, allowing states to access specialized teams like Summit County's Swiftwater Rescue Team.

The Summit County Emergency Management Agency also supports the Executive Board of the Summit County Special Operations Response Teams (SCSORT). Established on November 21, 1994, the SCSORT Executive Board provides support and oversight to various Special Operations Response Teams branches. These branches include Hazardous Materials, Water Rescue, Technical Rescue (including high angle, confined space, trench, structural collapse, and rope operations), and the Incident Management Assistance Team. Through this collaboration, Summit County EMA ensures that all operations within these branches are conducted efficiently and effectively for the county's overall disaster response capabilities.

**###**