

**Sales of New Lake Erie License Plate
Will Help Finance Improvement and Protection Efforts**

June 2004

The historic Toledo Harbor Light decorates Ohio's newest commemorative license plate, giving motorists another way to display their love for Lake Erie and contribute to the lake's protection. Unveiled June 17 at a meeting of the [Ohio Lake Erie Commission](#), the new plate design will be offered in addition to the Marblehead Lighthouse license plate, which has been one of Ohio's most popular specialty license plates since its introduction in 1993. Proceeds from the sale of these commemorative license plates benefit the [Lake Erie Protection Fund](#).

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Toledo Light, a three-story Romanesque structure that guards Toledo Harbor leading to the mouth of the Maumee River. The lighthouse was built in 1904 after the federal government dredged a deep-water channel linking Lake Erie and the Maumee River at the Port of Toledo's entrance. At that time, the structure was considered the most modern lighthouse anywhere in the world.

A set of Lake Erie license plates costs Ohioans an additional \$25 above regular vehicle registration fees at the time of purchase and with each annual renewal, with \$15 from each sale going to the Lake Erie Protection Fund. Administered by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission, the fund supports research and implementation projects, restoration and education efforts to protect and enhance Lake Erie. Since the creation of Ohio's first Lake Erie license plate in 1993, almost 500,000 plates have been sold, generating more than \$7.5 million for the Lake Erie Protection Fund. Both of the lighthouse license plate designs are the work of Ohio artist Ben Richmond.

"For more than 10 years, Ohioans have shown their support of our Great Lake by purchasing thousands of Lake Erie license plates," said Chris Jones, director of Ohio EPA and chairman of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission. "In celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the Toledo Harbor Lighthouse, it seemed fitting that we create a new plate to recognize this landmark, which has been such an important part of Toledo's history."



*Toledo Lighthouse
Photo Courtesy ODNR*

As with other Ohio license plates, the Lake Erie plates may be personalized or reserved (up to 6 characters) for an additional fee. Further information is available by calling the BMV toll-free hotline at 1-800-589-TAGS or by visiting their Web site at www.oplates.com.

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission was established to preserve Lake Erie's natural resources, water quality and ecosystem. It also promotes economic development in the region. The commission oversees the Lake Erie Protection Fund and distributes grants that focus on improving the quality of Lake Erie and to furthering the goals laid out in the Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan. Members include Ohio EPA and the Ohio departments of natural resources, agriculture, development, health and transportation.

In addition to the new plate, the original [Marblehead plate](#) will continue to be available. The Toledo Harbor Light plate is scheduled for release and sale in August. For more information about the plates, contact Jill Woodyard at the Ohio Lake Erie Commission at (419) 245-2514.

Links

Here are some links to more information about Lake Erie and its treasures.

- [Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan](#)
- [Ohio Department of Natural Resources Office of Coastal Management](#)
- [Great Lakes Commission](#)
- [Great Lakes Information Network](#) (GLIN)
- [Council of Great Lakes Governors](#)
- [International Joint Commission](#)
- [Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority](#)

- Lighthousefriends.com - locate information about lighthouses along and around Lake Erie's shore
 - [Toledo Harbor Lighthouse](#)
 - [Marblehead Lighthouse](#)