



June 7, 2010

Media Conference

3:00 PM

Council Chambers

Event Unfolds:

- Approximately 3:08 am on June 6 a severe weather event occurred in Leamington causing intense damage to an area extending from Fraser Road along Seacliff Drive to east of the Bevel Line
- After this event the Emergency Response Team was assembled at 4:00 AM and at 6:25 AM Deputy Mayor Rob Schmidt declared at State of Emergency and the emergency plan was implemented
- Emergency Management Ontario notified
- Early this morning investigators from Environment Canada confirmed that the damage was caused by a F1 tornado that briefly touched down and by high winds caused by a down burst which accompanied the tornado

First Response:

- Units conducted house to house visits and determined that there were no serious injuries or deaths
- Property damage to buildings, vehicles and equipment from falling trees and debris was widespread and severe
- Hydro service was cut off to residents in the storm area
- Broken glass was a hazard
- Some damage to gas lines was experience
- Police and fire attended the scene for traffic control and damage assessment
- Once daylight came traffic control became a major issue
- Building inspectors visited houses to determine if they were structurally safe for habitation
- Approximately 12 houses were deemed unsafe
- Public works crews began the process of removing trees from across the road ways
- Utilities sent out crews
- Work crews continued to work through the night
- A shelter station was set up at the Kinsmen Complex staffed by the Red Cross who could provide emergency shelter if required

Day two:

- Clean up continues with additional public works crews arriving from surrounding municipalities whose equipment will help speed up the process
- Essex Power Lines estimates all their lines will be restored by noon today
- Ontario Hydro hopes to have their customers restored by Wednesday evening
- Individual home owners will still have to arrange to fix any damage to utility services entering their homes and are reminded to use a licensed contractor as these installations need to be inspected and approved by the utility
- Municipal crews are removing and chipping trees on municipal property and rights of way, parks etc
- Home owners can bring cut up tree debris to the curb and it will be removed over time
- Those who wish can also take tree limbs directly to landfill on County Road 18
- Do not mix construction material in with tree debris as it cannot go into the chipper or be accepted by the landfill
- Residents are asked not to throw waste into the ravines as this may cause blocking of water
- We are hoping to have regular waste pick up in the area on Wed and Thursday but residents must remember that the usual rules apply...yard waste must be bundled and tied

Roads:

- Most roads are now open but you may experience temporary delays while work crews are clearing
- Seacliff Drive will remain closed from Sherk to County Road 31 for the time being
- This public ramp is open but boaters should avoid the area due to congestion on the roads around the marina
- Traffic congestion remains a problem along Cherry Lane and Danforth. Residents are asked to stay away from the area

Damage to Municipal Property:

- The marina docks, patio, play area and pergola are damaged. Docks A/B and C/D are unusable. Several sheds were destroyed. Some trees will need to be replaced
- We do not have enough dock space for transient boaters so we will look for ways to get replacement docks as soon as possible
- The pavilion will be open this weekend for a scheduled event
- This public ramp is open but boaters should avoid the area due to congestion on the roads around the marina
- The dug outs at the ball diamonds on Seacliff were blown out
- Seacliff Parks sustained heavy damage but some tree canopy around the centre area washrooms will remain. The playscape was not damaged. The roof came off the building nearest the lake. The beach area is in disarray but will recover. ERCA and arborists are assessing tree damage to see what can be salvaged.

Next Steps:

- Clean up will take some time perhaps another few weeks
- We will determine if we should declare a disaster-this usually takes some additional assessment at which time property owners will be notified
- Home owners will have to work with their insurance companies for settlement
- Numerous calls from people offering to volunteer in some way have been coming in and we are very grateful for this. We need to finish up the initial clean up before we can fully assess what additional help we will need
- The Red Cross can still be contacted should you need emergency shelter (255-0993)
- Thanks to all those who have worked through this difficult time, work crews, community groups, those who have provided food and water and to our residents who rise above the rest to pull together.