

# Sorbara hopeful of aid for flood victims

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approved the aid without getting formal approval from council.

Damage to the O'Brien home is estimated at more than \$150,000. He was shocked to learn Thursday his insurance company will only cover \$30,000.

"It's unbelievable the damage that has been done and nobody stands up and takes responsibility for it," said Mr. O'Brien, acknowledging the storm's damage pales in comparison to the devastation of the tsunami that left about 200,000 people dead.

Meanwhile, Vaughan storm victims were dealt another blow Thursday when the city indicated it will not pursue provincial disaster relief funding because it does not qualify.

Cautioning residents not to compare the storm to the tsunami, Mr. Sorbara said he still hopes to tap into some financial support for storm victims.

But answers could be some time coming, admitted Mr. Sorbara, who believes the storm's damage is more severe than has been reported.

"I wish I had the solution this afternoon and we could get the repairs done this weekend," said Mr. Sorbara, adding he is disappointed by the insurance industry's response to the crisis.

"These things take time." Meanwhile, Councillor Tony Carella, who called on Mayor Michael Di Biase to declare a state of emergency in the hardest-hit areas of the city, urged residents to attend a committee meeting Sept. 6 to voice their concerns.

"I don't agree with the statement issued from some quarter of the city (saying the municipality does not qualify for provincial disaster relief funding). I want to see the justification for it."

The city says it does not meet several criteria set out by the province including a rule stipulating damages must exceed the financial resources of individuals, the municipality and the community at large.

Markham Mayor Don Cousens, a member of York's finance committee and strong supporter of the region's tsunami assistance, said it's not fair to compare government response to the two weather crises.

The tsunami was a major catastrophe whose poverty-stricken victims had no ability to help themselves, which is not the case in the storm, he said.

But Jeanne Drive resident Gianfranco Locantore is upset with the response residents have received from government officials so far.

"There is a disaster in our community and where is the support?"



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