MARKHAM | Emergency Management

Ice Storm 2013 | Update

Monday, December 8th 2014

Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

Purpose

- To provide an update to City Council and our residents on the actions taken to recover from the 2013 Ice Storm





Ice Storm Statistics

Precipitation	Freezing Rain from Dec. 20-22
Ice Accumulation (Accretion)	20-25 mm (approx. 1 inch)
Power Outages In Markham	Approx 17 200 customers at 11am Dec. 22
Trees Damaged	Over 10 000
Markham's Coordinated Response	Dec. 21* – 31, 2013 *pre-ice storm meeting
2 Warming Centres	Operated Dec. 22-28





Ice Storm 2013 Recovery

- City developed a comprehensive action plan drawn from:
  - Real-time and post-event feedback from Council and stakeholders
  - Discussions with residents and Markham Action Group for Improved Community (MAGIC)
  - Post event debrief sessions with:
    - Markham Emergency Planning Committee and staff involved

Recovery Action Plan Overview

The action plan has 27 recommendations that fall into four focus areas:

1. Response and Clean-up
2. Mitigation and Recovery
3. Preparedness
4. Communication

Of the 27 recommendations,17 are complete and 10 are in progress.

1. Response and Clean-up

3 Recommendations in this area (2 completed, 1 in progress)

Key results

- Strengthened coordination with partners at York Region, Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and utility companies to support clean up on public and private properties
- A multi-year Storm Recovery Plan for Forestry and Operations was presented to Council this April





2. Mitigation and Recovery

7 Recommendations in this area (4 completed 3 in progress)

Key results

- Forestry completed clearing of hazardous trees in boulevards, parks and watercourses
- Tree removals completed on city property with Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) weakened trees scheduled for removal
- Replacement tree planting* is scheduled for 2015 and 2016

* Planting of City trees will adhere to guidelines to avoid conflicts with hydro lines. Species based on specific criteria to ensure healthier and diverse canopy.





2. Mitigation and Recovery *continued*

Key results *continued*

- Staff plan to report on the potential for establishing guidelines for maximum height and minimum distance separation between private trees and hydro lines
- Staff plan to investigate alternatively powered traffic lights at major intersections and report to Council in 2015

3. Preparedness

8 Recommendations in this area (5 completed 3 in progress)

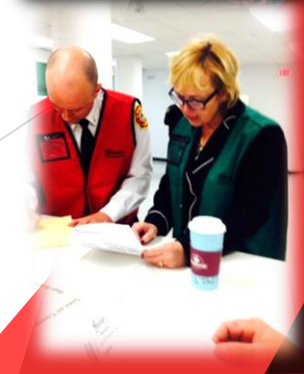
Key results

- Enhanced public education program delivered in emergency preparedness
  - Held 18 public education events/presentations including ratepayers, community and faith based groups
  - A quick reference guide/checklist for residents on protecting their private property and seniors specific factsheet available on web portal
- Trained additional staff to work in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to support work in a prolonged emergency
  - Over 100 staff currently trained to work in EOC
  - Participated in three Emergency Exercises in 2014
- Emergency management workshop planned for elected officials in February 2015









3. Preparedness *continued*

Key results *continued*

- Reinforced liaison relations with external agencies for coordination of resources/services
  - York Region Police Emergency Management Unit established as a result of ice storm,
  - PowerStream hired an Emergency Manager to liaise with municipalities,
- Improved linkages with community and faith groups
  - Created a database of faith groups to support coordination of resources and communication with residents
  - Ratepayers associations email distribution list used to announce special public education events offered e.g. CanWarn stormspotting
- Work underway to provide back-up power for designated City facilities

4. Communication

9 Recommendations in this area (6 completed and 3 in progress)

Key results

- Reinforced liaison relations with external agencies for coordination of resources/services
  - York Region Police, PowerStream, etc.
- Improved linkages with other levels of governments, community groups and faith organizations, with particular focus on vulnerable sector during emergencies
  - Faith groups, Community Care Access Centres(CCAC) and Community and Home Assistance for Seniors (CHATS), Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Office
- Contact Centre staff able to operate “virtual” centre to ensure response to resident needs through the use of new technologies

4. Communication *continued*

Key results continued

- Emergency preparedness information and resources provided to councillors for their newsletters – on an ongoing basis
- Installation of new electronic information boards at Markham Fire Stations
- Staff plan to investigate other external communication channels, such as 1-800 phone number for disseminating information to residents and staff
- Staff currently developing a database of non City-owned electronic information boards and billboards that can be used during emergencies for communication (public/private collaboration)

Conclusion

Based on our learnings from the 2013 Ice Storm, the City of Markham has successfully implemented a number of improvements to enhance our response to future city-wide emergencies.

The City is committed to working collaboratively with its partners and residents to build a more resilient Markham.

Contact for Information and Presentation Requests

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