

**The Great Ice Storm of 1998  
and  
Disaster Relief in Leeds-Grenville**

**A Report  
December 1, 1998**



photo - Recorder & Times

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# **THE GREAT ICE STORM OF 1998 IN LEEDS-GRENVILLE:**

## **A Report from the Leeds-Grenville Disaster Relief Committee**

### **PURPOSE OF THE LGDRC REPORT**

This report is intended to be an accurate plain language account of the relief effort after the Great Ice Storm of '98 as it pertains to Leeds-Grenville, Ontario. It is written with the collaboration and input of the entire Committee and with notes from several members of the Committee in particular Paul Fournier, Allan Gillis, Sandra Lawn, Stuart Leyenaar, Allan Markell, Steve McDonald, Manon McLellan and Dennis O'Grady. The editor is Sandra Lawn.

The committee has not resisted the need to comment on the entire emergency preparedness process as they continue to be preoccupied with the implications of the ice storm - from their first meeting in January to the writing of this report and beyond. We hope it will be a useful guide for our own local governments and other communities as they put in place up-to-date emergency response and disaster relief processes for future natural disasters.

### **"THE EMERGENCY: THE STORM"**

History will attest that this natural disaster put millions of Canadians in Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia to a supreme test. Without the dauntless spirit of community the story would have been quite different. Tragically there were three lives lost in

Leeds-Grenville. However there were no more because:

- main roads and transportation were passable throughout the *recovery*
- food and gas were available
- telephones and media outlets, for the most part, still worked
- the army/militia was quick to respond
- there were lots of volunteers to help out
- although there was individual anxiety, there was no community panic
- supplies, technical help came to eastern Ontario from all over North America
- only one disaster, the ice storm, occurred
- most municipalities had a plan of some nature in place

The delivery of electrical energy through elaborate grids, communications systems, physical safety, transportation systems, existing emergency plan and social and health services were all tested. And it was the brave and hardy people on the ground who came through with flying colours.

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In Leeds-Grenville where many municipalities were newly amalgamated through provincial restructuring, the melding of neighbourhoods, the sharing, and the caring were incomparable. There is fitting pride in the way we managed to get through it all.

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The prevailing memory is of neighbours helping neighbours and our brave approach to the "Great North" coming to the fore during and after the storm. Many in Leeds-Grenville waited weeks for their power to come back on. The more rural communities in the north of Leeds-Grenville were hardest hit although the devastation to our forests included the urban forests of our more urban communities.

## THE AFTER-MATH and DISASTER RELIEF

The municipal councils of Leeds-Grenville however did not hesitate to act, Official declarations of Disaster were made, the *Guidelines* of the province were consulted and on January 21, 1998 the Leeds-Grenville Disaster Relief Committee was formed with an official appointee from all 18 local governments in place and ensconced at the United Counties building of Leeds and Grenville in Brockville.

At least two books were written<sup>1</sup> and several sociological and political studies undertaken.

The 1998-99 Safe Communities Handbook -*Your Community Emergency Preparedness Guide Book*, Recorder and Times, 1998; the Ontario Hospital Association's *Beacons in the Storm/OHA Region #2 Hospitals Respond to Ice Storm 1998* and reports such as the Kemptville District Hospital report: *Ice Storm '98 and the Impact on food services* and many other reports have added to the body of knowledge and awareness.

Assessments of tree damage also required the assistance of foresters from

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<sup>1</sup> *The Ice Storm, an Historic Record in Photographs of January 1998, with a text by Mark Abley; McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1998 and Ice Storm '98 ; The Brockville Recorder and Times, 1998*

government, private industry, and academia.

Tree damage remains a vivid reminder of the Storm and tree planting, pruning and removal will be ongoing for years to come.

## THE BIG PICTURE CALLS FOR BIG THINKING

Many were blaming El Niño for the storm. But in the sober light of day there are many who say that Mother Nature was teaching us something about the extremes of precipitation that Climate Change will bring. The Executive Summary of *Canada's Second National Report on Climate Change* puts it plainly. "If climate change occurs to the extent predicted by current models, there will be a significant risk to Canada's environment, with potentially serious consequences for the health of the Canadian economy, particularly agriculture, forestry, and fisheries." and even more pertinent to eastern Ontario "The frequency and intensity of storms are also projected to increase."<sup>2</sup>

Although we cannot prevent some natural disasters such as earthquakes we can help to improve the climate we live in and reduce global climate change. Greater energy efficiency, conservation and restoration of our natural resources especially trees and woody plants, and use of alternative sources of energy will all help to reduce green house gases and therefore improve the environment. Leeds-Grenville could take a lead role in this.

Experts also tell us that serious problems from the so-called "Millennium Bug" could be shutting down communication, transportation and financial systems.

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<sup>2</sup> *Canada's Second national Report on Climate Change, Actions to meet Commitments Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Environment Canada, 1997*

Our committee also recognized that in order to confront future emergencies the effort must be made on several fronts: individual families, institutions, business, agriculture, organizations, communities, and municipal, provincial and federal governments.

## **Recommendations from the Leeds-Grenville Disaster Relief Committee - the LGDRC**

### ***Community preparedness for future natural disasters:***

#### ***The Emergency Plan itself***

Our lower tier municipalities *may*, according to the Emergency Plans Act of Ontario have a plan; this should be mandatory and these plans must be plainly written with ample input from those who will operate with it.

While it is possible to develop a Diefenbunker mentality it is prudent to think seriously about:

- ⇒ hurricanes: in 1955 Hurricane Hazel killed over 100 people in Ontario and it was weak compared to Hurricane Mitch
- ⇒ blizzards: what if they lasted 2-3 weeks and we had no power?
- ⇒ earthquakes: what if our designated shelters were destroyed?
- ⇒ no communications, no armed forces, no supplies? lawlessness?

It is also expedient to:

- make annual appointments to an emergency preparedness committee

that includes coordinators, volunteers, politicians and professionals.

- commit an annual budget for emergency preparedness training, testing, equipment, and planning
- work each lower-tier municipal plan into a county-wide plan; make clear the roles of the County plan, the lower tier municipal plan, the province and the Department of National Defence, railway authorities and other roles
- recognize the interdependency of municipal governments and ensure that adjoining plans are worked out cooperatively and
- put a formal review process in place to keep manual(s) up to date and conduct regular training “mock disasters” at the County and lower tier level. Participation in the Dupont sponsored CARE committee would be an advantage.

#### ***Readiness Routines***

- Ensure all emergency equipment is tested and/or inspected semi-annually. Ensure an adequate working generator of electricity is available at all times.
- Each municipality or interdependent groups of municipalities might wish to build or retrofit a building to be self-contained and functional regardless of the disaster.
- hold annual conferences/seminars with expert assistance, table top exercises, plans’ updating etc.

#### ***Communications***

- Local Disaster Relief Committee (LDRC) members could be part of the communications teams
- ensure one coordinating agency
- promote use of wind-up radios, short wave radio transmitters, desktop publishing capacity - these all help to

quell any sense of panic and keep people informed

- have a communication plan that penetrates into the *entire* disaster area
- ways of getting ready cash, other home emergency preparedness
- each municipality should be enrolled in the "Community Alert Network" sponsored by Dupont Maitland. (It only costs if you use it and is an excellent way to reach 100's if not thousands of people in a very few minutes.)
- Ontario Hydro and other similar agencies and providers of public goods must ensure local knowledge at the other end of the telephone. Easy to access accurate information is key. It is encouraging to learn that Hydro line design changes have been made with respect to guy wires and that Hydro is establishing new communication officers and new preparedness levels of organization. It is important for municipalities planning meetings/exercises etc. to include Ontario Hydro.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The transportation of goods and people can be critical in a disaster. Ports, airports, highways, roads or the lack thereof necessitate a well worked out approach. We should plan for distribution of goods by vehicles that do not need roads and identify local landing locations for small aircraft and helicopters.



## **DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMMES**

- The official guidelines for relief programmes must be kept up-to-date
- Keep a "plain language" model claim form up to date and distributed.
- involve the current LDRC members and their successors in coordinating communications
- ensure a tie in with safety nets already in place for handling stressful events especially the ministerial associations and churches.

## **Relationships with the Provincial and Federal Governments**

- public policy at the provincial and federal levels should be coordinated so that in the case of an emergency that meets the federal criteria relief efforts will be coordinated so that there is a cooperative rather than a competitive approach
- avoid ministry and departmental "turf wars" while recognizing and calling upon the competency of government officials "on the ground" and in the regional offices
- to limit confusion avoid duplication and competition for media attention in photo "ops" etc.
- have central communications point within the disaster area or close by - or at the very least people who are trained and knowledgeable about the area in question
- governments should ensure that the same program is not announced several times therefore creating confusion
- governments should fund Emergency Measures adequately and develop ways to reduce dependency on one energy source, new approaches to the

electrical grid to reduce its vulnerability etc.

- shorten time lines between the cabinet, staff and public consultations, indeed keeping the *Guidelines* up to date would be most helpful
- respect knowledge and competence of the local community
- make it clear that traditional partisanship has no place in an emergency. All sectors of the rural and urban community need fair and equal treatment
- internet communications where used, need to be accurate and up to date

***Income tax receipts:***

income tax receipts can easily be prepared locally rather than at some central place - using the municipalities' charity status for issuing taxable receipts would save time and frustration also.

## **THE LEEDS-GRENVILLE DISASTER RELIEF COMMITTEE (LGDRC)**

### ***Appointees***

a) this earnest and committed group was composed of representatives of all 18 lower tier and separated municipalities in Leeds-Grenville.

These were:

1. Village of Athens - Dick Rider, a retired OPP officer and community volunteer
2. Township of Augusta - Carl Polite, former Reeve and retired Dupont Maitland Works employee
3. City of Brockville - Paul Fournier, lawyer and community volunteer
4. Village of Cardinal - Rev. Jack Urquart, retired minister and community volunteer (until May)
5. Township of Edwardsburgh - Allan Gillis, former reeve, retired conservation authority employee and community volunteer
6. Township of Elizabethtown - Allan Markell, retired business person, accountant, and community volunteer
7. Township of Front of Escott - Frank Purvis, former Reeve retired from the committee and was replaced by another former Reeve, Gary Endhoven, retired educator and farmer
8. Townships of Front of Yonge and Rear of Yonge and Escott - Sherry Reed AMCT(O), municipal employee and community volunteer
9. Township of Front of Leeds and Lansdowne - Eric Webster - retired farmer, member of Leeds County Land Stewardship Council, and community volunteer
10. Town of Gananoque - Christy Keyes business person and community volunteer

11. Kitley Township - Garnet Baker, retired educator, member of Leeds County Land Stewardship Council, and community volunteer
12. Township of Rear of Leeds and Lansdowne - Rev. Myra Garvin, United Church minister and community volunteer
13. Village of Merrickville-Wolford - David Paton, retired Chartered Accountant and community volunteer
14. Township of North Grenville - Dennis O'Grady, General Manager of South Nation River Conservation Authority
15. Town of Prescott - Sandra Lawn, business woman, former mayor of Prescott and community volunteer
16. Township of Rideau Lakes - Shirley Bryden CMO, retired clerk-treasurer and community volunteer
17. Village of Westport - Rose Ryan, retired business person and community volunteer

Sandra Lawn was elected chair, Allan Markell as vice chair, Paul Fournier as chair of the fund-raising committee and Steve McDonald, Clerk-Treasurer for the Township of Elizabethtown was chosen as treasurer. Allan Gillis was our representative first on the Criteria sub-committee and later on the Extreme Financial Hardship Committee. Lorraine Crotty was administrative assistant until Manon McLellan was hired on May 4, 1998.

Gary Howden represented the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing while Stuart Leyenaar represented the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs.

### **The Mandate of the Committee**

In the immediate aftermath of the declarations of disaster, the community responded to their responsibility and each municipality appointed a representative to the local disaster relief committee. The

mandate of the committee was to provide relief - helping property owners to return essential elements of their homes, farms, and businesses to pre-disaster conditions. Guidance was directly from the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program, *Guidelines for Disaster Relief Committees*, Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Queen's Printer of Ontario, 1988.

These *Guidelines* included the general rules of meetings, responsibilities of each sub-committee, appointment and duties of officers, appointment of auditor and damage claim appraisers, the appeal process, bank accounts, office accommodations, collections agencies e.g. Red Cross, dealing with the media, fund raising suggestions, claim forms, and eligibility criteria.

This mandate was gradually and firmly changed as the Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee took on most of the tasks of the local committee except for fund raising and liaison with the people "on the ground."

## **Activities and Accomplishments of the LGDRC**

The committee scrupulously followed these *Guidelines* especially during the intensely active first few weeks. At least one weekly meeting was held from January to June with one meeting every 2 to 4 weeks thereafter until December 1998.

i) each municipal office was contacted and all provided useful data on the total numbers of residences, businesses and farms in their municipalities. Some provided an early estimate of private losses. They also all distributed the Preliminary Estimate of Damage forms and fielded many inquiries.

ii) rules of procedure were adopted which put an emphasis on consensual decision making by the entire committee. The chair facilitated this decision making. Robert's Rules of Order were followed for all decisions that required it although the committee developed the habit of open brainstorming on matters that could otherwise have been difficult to solve.

iii) the process of claim settlement had much of the language and approach of the insurance industry therefore consultation with the insurance industry and independent adjusting firms was of great benefit

iv) the design, distribution and collation and reporting of over 5,000 "preliminary estimate of damage" forms and regular reports from our administrative assistant (Lorraine Crotty for most of this period.) Analysing data was time consuming for Lorraine and for members of the special committee who undertook to do this.

v) weekly meetings with the other seven regions were also faithfully attended by the chair and vice chair beginning on January 22, 1998.

vi) a Request for Proposals for an independent adjusting firm was publicly advertised. Three proposals were received and a firm was chosen in principle only as it was becoming clear that the Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee - the Umbrella Group, was taking on more and more of the responsibilities originally spelled out in the 1988 *Guidelines*.

vii) a brief was prepared and submitted to Robert Runciman,

M.P.P. and through him to the Ontario Cabinet

viii) liability insurance was obtained after consultation with Cowan's Insurance, well known municipal insurer, and the determination that members were not covered by their municipal insurance as originally thought

ix) speakers at various meetings were vital links to the many other ice storm related programs that were appearing. These speakers were from Human Resources Development Canada, the Ice Storm Tree Recovery Group, Ministry of Natural Resources, the Quelme Group (adjusting firm chosen by EODRC) and the Psycho-social coordinator from the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

x) many individual members of the Committee reported regularly to their respective Councils and fielded an enormous number of phone and personal inquiries

xi) the Committee discussed and prepared a brief on the eligibility criteria. This eventually led to Allan Gillis' serving on the Criteria Committee of the EODRC and bringing the decisions and advice of this committee before the EODRC and eventually before the Cabinet for a decision.

xii) presentations were made by Sandra Lawn to the Leeds and Grenville Insurance Brokers' Association, the Eastern Ontario Emergency Response meeting sponsored by Dupont of Maitland, a South Grenville District High School Class and three public information meetings in Athens and Prescott and in North Grenville by Dennis O'Grady.

xiii) our public meeting in Athens on June 4th was most successful with over 70 attending and many good questions asked by residents, farmers and business people.

xiv) confidentiality forms designed by legal counsel for the EODRC were signed by each member of the committee and by Manon McLellan

xv) approximately 10 media releases were sent to the local media of Leeds-Grenville; more were sent earlier on as the EODRC undertook that function themselves. The Brockville Recorder and Times, a daily, was especially supportive: financially and with publicity. Four weeklies and the Athens Mural (a monthly) all printed our news releases.

xvi) committee members undertook to personally bring this report and recommendations to the attention of each and every municipal council in Leeds-Grenville.

## Fund-raising

One of the areas where our committee shone was in fund-raising. The committee knew what they were doing, responding well to their chair Paul Fournier well known for his fund-raising capabilities. Additional volunteers were recruited from throughout Leeds-Grenville and a thoughtful, effective campaign led to \$520,000 being raised. Activities were as follows:

⇒ a committee of 25 members who formed sub-committees responsible for such areas as professionals, service clubs, bingo halls, special names, franchises and insurance institutions, foundations,

communications, industry and commerce, United Way, Ministerial Association and church liaison.

- ⇒ this committee met regularly at 7:30 a.m., receiving reports on activities and developing strategy for new initiatives.
- ⇒ a fund-raising kick off breakfast was held on February 26, 1998 at the Brockville Country Club. Some substantial gifts were announced along with some smaller but well appreciated donations. This good start was sponsored by the 1000 Island Community Development Corporation and the Grenville Community Development Centre.
- ⇒ on May 6, 1998 a North Grenville group of volunteers lead by Harry Pratt held a breakfast for 200 people. The Minister of Defence and several area politicians were in attendance. Special donations were received; tributes were made to the military personnel who had been key in the North Grenville emergency operation.
- ⇒ special names, service clubs, businesses, churches, the Brockville Theatre's Wingfield Farms presentation by Rod Beattie, foundations and municipal governments, citizens through a targeted mail drop, and many others gave generously of their talent and funds to make the campaign a success. The appeal of the Province's "up-to-four-to one" matching was helpful
- ⇒ donation cans placed throughout Leeds-Grenville by the committee and in Brockville by the DBIA, brought in several hundred dollars. The Riverfest committee (which organizes Brockville's major summer festival) made disaster Relief the theme of the festival and significantly assisted our fund raising efforts.
- ⇒ volunteers were mustered for tree sales, collection at the Snow Birds air show and distribution of collection cans. An emphasis was placed on ensuring that our activities were

conducted for all of Leeds and Grenville rather than any particular area.

- ⇒ thank you letters and receipts were sent and photo opportunities arranged.
- ⇒ A closing breakfast "Celebrating the Spirit of Community" on June 16th was a huge success - also with generous sponsorship of Wheeler's, Your Independent Grocer and the Royal Canadian legion Branch 96 and their Ladies Auxiliary.

As a major function of the LGDRC, fund raising was considered a great success as Leeds-Grenville topped the per capita response of all eight regions involved.

## Administration

In the beginning and with cots and briefing rooms still intact, the County provided administrative assistance: Lorraine Crotty coordinator of the Waste Management project was our competent minute taker, statistician and information officer. The work load however was so heavy that on May 4th Manon McLellan was hired as administrative assistant for a maximum of 24 hours per week.

With Manon on board a small office was set up in the Counties building and from here central information for the public, liaison between the residents of Leeds and Grenville and the Umbrella Group, and organizing the final collection of 6,001 final claim forms was accomplished. The final three days before the June 15th deadline were hectic, the province having mounted an effective campaign reminding people of this deadline.

Although the EODRC was set up to deal with applicant inquiries, the local office was inundated with telephone calls (averaging 80 to 100 calls per day) during the peak three weeks. It became confusing and frustrating for callers and the administrator not to have access to the requested information. From the

administrative assistant's point of view the ideal situation would have been to "share, on-line, general applicant information with the EODRC, keeping confidentiality in mind."

Manon also began providing administrative support to the busy fund-raising committee who met weekly until June 14, 1998. She sent out thank-you letters, set up photo opportunities with the Recorder and Times, sent out a 6,500 residential mail drop and organized the logistics of the highly successful "Spirit of Community" Breakfast on June 16, 1998. This was a show of appreciation to donors to the cause and marked the winding down of the campaign.

A week or so before our Breakfast the province began to advertise that our office would be open on Saturday, June 13th in the morning and until midnight on June 15th. This of course put unexpected pressure on the office and with the help of the Chair, the Vice Chair and Gary Howden of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing who, knowing the bind we were in, came and stayed at the County building to receive the very small trickle of applications coming in - including one just before midnight!

Activity in the Office was fairly high for four weeks after this although thankfully the telephone calls did diminish.

The administrative assistant also began sending out receipts once the Kingston United Way ceased to do so.

The Office remained a link between local residents and the EODRC, although calls were often directed to the EODRC due to the lack of information at the local level.

With the Leeds-Grenville DRC meetings then being held monthly, activity, though greatly reduced increased slightly once a month with minutes and other meeting materials being prepared. Although the office itself was only open a few hours per week, Manon continued to field calls from her home as required.

A quarterly financial reconciliation to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing was prepared by Manon.

Manon was eventually seconded for two and half weeks to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to help with a study and the administration of the Preliminary Estimate of Damage Forms that did not match with a final claim form.

## **\$The Financial Perspective\$**

Upon his appointment as the Treasurer Steven McDonald made application to Revenue Canada for a Charitable Registration Number. This permitted the local committee to recognize donations with official receipts for income tax purposes although in the end the EODRC charitable number was used for the receipts completed by the Kingston United Way and the LGDRC.

Concurrently each of the chartered banks in the area responded to our invitation to provide services and waive service charges on the operation of the account. The Royal Bank of Canada in Brockville was chosen and *all* banks agreed to accept donations. The Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer were appointed signing officers with any two having authority to sign bank documents authorized by the committee.

As recommended by the umbrella committee, the first batch of receipts were issued by the Kingston United Way at a cost of \$1 each. Although this was satisfactory, local issuing would have provided faster turnaround.

An expense report for mileage and out of pocket expenses of the Committee members was designed. All expenses including the Chair and Vice Chair's expenses associated with the EODRC and the administrative assistant were paid by the United Counties of Leeds and

Grenville and reimbursed eventually by the Province. The United Counties required that vouchers verified by the Treasurer be submitted on a regular basis detailing all expenses.

Regular reports were submitted to the Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee outlining funds raised to date and transfers to the EODRC were made as required. The financial activities of the local committee were essentially complete by late 1998.

The committee was wise in their selection of an experienced municipal treasurer as the chief financial officer and all financial matters were handled professionally.

## **Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs**

Liaison with OMAFRA eventually lead to attendance at most meetings by Stuart Leyenaar, the Leeds and Grenville Agriculture and Rural Representative. OMAFRA had moved quickly with financial aid but many farmers suffered greatly and liaison with our committee was most valuable for all concerned.

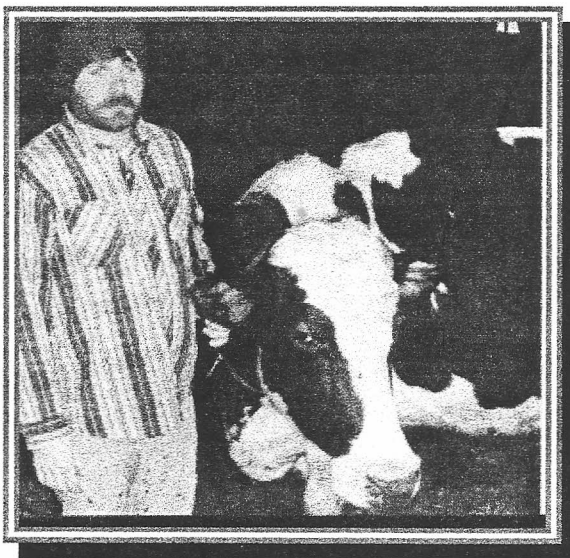


photo - Recorder and Times

Stuart's main purpose at our meetings was to act as a communication link with OMAFRA's clients in the farm and rural communities and the farm organizations who represent the majority of commercial agricultural producers in Ontario. The Great Ice Storm of '98 provided a "real life" test of OMAFRA's ability to provide direct, practical assistance to virtually all members of the rural community.

OMAFRA's direct assistance included the coordinating of generators sent into the area, developing a survey form to assist in gathering information of immediate needs from the farm community, and acting as liaison between farmers and the disaster response teams. Direct provincial financial assistance to all registered farmers was distributed within three weeks of the storm.

The unique integration of the family home with the workplace i.e. the farmstead required special care to ensure fairness and consistency in the application of relief programmes. The OMAFRA newsletter to the Leeds and Grenville farm community was effectively used as a vehicle to distribute the *Preliminary Estimate of Damage* form developed by the LGDRC to about 1100 families, along with instructions for completing it. Stuart also presented the various assistance programmes at four community information meetings in Leeds and Grenville.

The field staff of OMAFRA continues to function as an effective liaison and communication link with rural municipalities, farm and rural organizations and emergency readiness and response committees currently under development.

## **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

The Kingston field office of MMAH sent representatives to our meetings from the beginning and eventually that

representative became Gary Howden who proved to also be a valuable member of the group as well as a volunteer. With Queen's Park MMAH officials becoming more and more involved with the management of the Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee, Gary's function with our committee became supportive and liaison.

Gary was appreciative of the effective way the LGDRC functioned with their governance procedures ensuring a brainstorming approach to decision making that respected each member's viewpoint and ideas.

### **Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee (EODRC) and the LGDRC**

The EODRC was established on January 22, 1998 in Smiths Falls when the chairs of each local disaster relief committee were called to assemble. The purpose of the committee was to ensure the coordination of relief efforts already underway in each of the eight regions:

- Cornwall (one representative only at the EODRC)
- Kingston, Lennox and Addington
- Lanark
- Leeds and Grenville
- Prescott and Russell
- Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton
- Renfrew County and
- Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

Shortly thereafter two representatives of the Red Cross and the Vice Chairs were added with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) adding support and advice to the EODRC.

Five sub-committees were established:

- Fund-raising

- Fund Management in the beginning only
- Claims Criteria (included one member of the LGDRC)
- Urgent Needs (included one member of the LGDRC) became Extreme Financial Hardship and
- eventually a Management Committee composed of the chair and vice chairs of the EODRC and two representatives of the MMAH

#### **Mandate of the EODRC**

- coordination, ensuring that all claimants no matter where they were from were compensated fairly and equally
- facilitation of major fund-raising events and pooling of funds
- administration of the collective effort

#### **Activities and Accomplishments of the EODRC**

In the beginning the first requirements were:

- obtain an estimate of the number of claimants, the type and cost of damages and
  - coordinate and suggest fund-raising activities
1. The design of a Preliminary Estimate of Damage Form was one of the first challenges with Ottawa-Carleton and Prescott and Russell having a form out right from the beginning. LGDRC quickly designed their own similar form which included the need for a signature and the name of the insurance company. The EODRC advised against including the approved list of eligible items from the 1988 Ontario *Guidelines* and the

LGDRC concurred after some discussion.

2. Preliminary Estimate of Damage Forms (PED's) were collected by the individual LDRC's and summarized by the EODRC. These totaled \$75 million and listed many different losses. Some of the PED forms did not require any information about insurance and other programmes and information was considered a guess for the most part.

By February all municipalities had commenced fund-raising and the EODRC kept track and issued news releases and arranged photo "ops". Fund-raising was very successful with Fred Blackstein of the Renfrew Disaster Relief Committee serving as overall chair. He also was responsible for persuading Major General Lewis MacKenzie (retired) to be honorary chair of fund-raising.

3. The criteria guidelines from 1988 did not meet the needs of such an ice storm. With the assistance of the interested LDRC's (Leeds and Grenville spent several hours analyzing, brain storming and deciding on their recommendations then passing them on to the Claims Sub-committee) and the Criteria Sub-committee who met many times, an amended criteria list was submitted to Cabinet and their approval was received within one week.
4. From the end of January, until the present, the EODRC has met weekly with sub-committees meeting in between and at least once a week also.
5. After the initial meetings in Smiths Falls, Perth, Mississippi Mills, Cornwall, Brockville, Rockland, North Grenville, Ottawa and Kingston, the offices of the EODRC were located in the Eastern Breeders building near Kemptville and subsequent meetings were held there.

Rental costs were covered by the Province.

6. The Funds-management ad hoc committee tendered for a financial institution and after some time the Bank of Montreal was chosen.
7. An administrator was recommended by an hoc committee and hired by the EODRC. Several people were interviewed. Joanne Steadman of Ottawa was selected. The rest of the staff was hired by Joanne.

Staff salaries and office expenses were paid directly by the Provincial government.

8. An ad hoc committee interviewed the applicants for the role of adjuster following a public advertisement. Four groups applied and four were interviewed with the firm Quelmec Adjusting Ltd. being chosen and recommended to the EODRC.
9. An Extreme Financial Hardship Committee was formed with a new set of criteria established. This committee met weekly. An elaborate method of review and auditing was set up. Claimants were identified only by number.
10. An Ottawa auditing firm was confirmed following a closed invitation to tender and also an open Request for Proposals.
11. The EODRC was incorporated as an Ontario non-share corporation and registered as a charity with Revenue Canada. All members and staff of the EODRC signed confidentiality agreements. Liability insurance and Errors and Omissions insurance were purchased.
12. The adjusters developed a computerized system that took some time to get up to speed and to enter all of the required data. Coding, reporting and cheque preparation all

required great accuracy and the committee audited the adjusters' recommendations and questioned in great detail the claims that appeared before them. As the committee could not review every claim and get the job done expeditiously a statistically sound auditing system was eventually set up. All of this was time consuming.

13. Coding allowed explanatory letters to go out to claimants. The chair of the EODRC was designated as spokesperson with the media and as the process wore on the other members were advised to ensure that this was the rule.
14. A process for considering appeals was eventually established and instead of an appeal panel as advised initially by the ad hoc committee asked to recommend a method the group decided to accept an "ombuds adjuster" appointed by Quelmec. The EODRC was to approve the appointment but this has not yet been done.
15. A major undertaking of the EODRC was the recommendation of eligibility. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs provided staff support on the development of an elaborate adjusters manual. Any changes to this were accomplished through the Ministry's preparation of "issue papers" and subsequent presentation to the EODRC for decision. About 30 such issue papers have been presented to date. This would indicate that a lot of learning was going on as the EODRC went along.
16. Streamlining the approval process was difficult to accomplish with long and drawn out meetings from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. being common. This placed a great burden on the volunteers who were not there as part of their regular work duties. The chair, Jim Bennett, a retired university professor spent many long

hours every week on this work. Andy Brown the first Chair and an active farmer also dedicated many hours during his tenure.

In late October the Province convened four focus groups to review the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Programme. The chairs of the eight regions and representatives of the Lanark floods attended. A report is anticipated before the end of 1998.

The work of the EODRC is not expected to be completed until the spring of 1999.

### **Other Programmes -**

Various other programmes were administered or funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Natural Resources, Human Resources Development Canada and the Ministry of Economic Development Trade and Tourism. Although announcements made more than once, more forms to fill out and an extended deadline for the Canada Ontario Business Recovery Assistance programme, created confusion these programmes were appreciated as a compliment to the ODRAP program.

Special concern for the forests and woodlots of eastern Ontario remains on people's minds. Efforts are ongoing with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest, the University of Guelph, OMAFRA, MNR, the conservation authorities and others to ensure that this is not forgotten.



### **Role of the Department of National Defence during the emergency:**

Although this report deals primarily with the relief effort following the emergency it is useful to learn from the experience of

one of the communities that was assisted greatly by the military. North Grenville in their report has recommended the following:

- *“the need to call in military assistance must be predetermined by the Task Force in a planned and effective manner.*
- *the role of the military in emergency situations could be defined under various scenarios in an Emergency Plan*
- *the procedure for calling in the military must be defined within the Emergency Plan and included in county level planning and procedures worked out with DND*
- *the location for housing and feeding the military should be predetermined and contingencies could be detailed in an Emergency Plan*
- *the ability to ask for specific types of equipment in advance would be of assistance. For example, had we pre requested Water Buffaloes, our ability to respond to the needs of the rural sector would have been better. Also Redi-Heaters, pumps and generators [on hand could have improved] the time for the military to respond to urgent needs upon arrival.”<sup>3</sup>*

## **The Extreme Financial Hardship Committee of the EODRC**

- On April 1, 1988 the roles of the Urgent Needs and Extreme Financial Hardship Committees were rolled into one following a lengthy meeting chaired by Barry Crampton of the Lanark Disaster Relief Committee.

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<sup>3</sup> from debriefing notes of the chair of the Emergency Task Force for North Grenville, Dave Delaney

- On April 14, 1998 the membership was formalized with Allan Gillis as the LGDRC representative. The Committee included reps from each of the eight regions and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health.
- The criteria for Extreme Financial Hardship were drawn up for Ministry approval. Income eligibility benchmarks were set.
- Larry Lasage, an Ottawa-Carleton volunteer, was chosen chair and Jane Buchan of the Red Cross vice chair.
- The committee began processing claims on August 12, 1998. It is important to note that all claims are given a number when they are returned to Quelmec, therefore committee members have no names, addresses etc.
- Decisions are based on the information provided on the forms. Sometimes, if this information was inadequate there was delay.
- The committee is presently meeting every two weeks and processing 12 to 15 claims per meeting.
- As of November 3, 1998, there were approximately 160 Extreme Financial Hardship claims in the system at an anticipated cost of \$500,000.

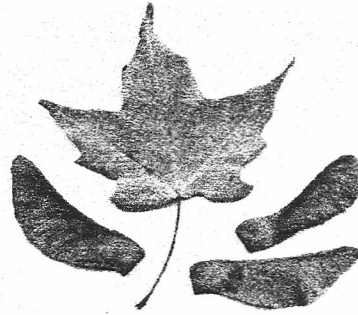
## **Conclusions:**

The hard work of community volunteers during the Ice Storm remains the overwhelming memory of this disaster. Many hard lessons for public policy makers at all levels remain as they work to ensure that every community is as ready as they can be for a natural disaster.

Long term decisions on energy sources and distribution, social and health considerations, environmental factors, technological preparation and the distribution of relief must be made with the very best and most current knowledge that is consistently kept up to date and implemented wisely.

Well prepared communities, respected for their capacity and working in partnership with other governments and organizations are the key.

This report is respectfully submitted to each and every municipal council in Leeds-Grenville for their consideration and action.



Signed:

Date:

# Ice storm response recognized

The province has high praise for the administrators in Owen Hydro. The public relations video included shots of crumpled electrical towers and fallen poles interspersed with clips and interviews about the storm.

A 10 THE RECORDER AND TIMES, Wednesday

*in all its horrible b*

In Support  
THE LEEDS  
DISASTER P  
Letter fr  
Township of North Grenville  
ICE STORM DAMAGE  
Office Storm Damage  
lete for the 1998

## Hitting a moving target:

Ice storm relief still weeks away  
By RYLAND COYNE

Storm claims being paid

## Relief group

The main activities of the Leeds and Grenville Disaster Relief Committee, continue to be fundraising, claims settlement procedures and meetings with the East Grenville Disaster Relief Committee.

It could be eight weeks before the storm damage is repaired.

## raise money

Gananoque claims total \$55 million with a value of \$58,534. Frontenac County claims total \$65 million, totalling \$109,390.

Red Cross donates \$2,000,000 to storm relief  
Canadian Red Cross has donated \$2 million to the East Grenville Disaster Relief Committee.

Ice storm damage begs big cleanup  
Ice storm victims

Storm '98  
Lanark raises \$1.65 million in federal aid  
By RONALD ZAJAC, Staff Writer

Ice-storm victims  
Payouts to be if fund-raising  
Continued from page 1  
He said 113 downed poles and 15 towers in North Grenville were damaged. He said the province is now on a list of the most damaged areas in the world. He said the province is now on a list of the most damaged areas in the world.

Staff Reporter  
they danced  
in the end  
thousands of dollars  
people who were dev  
ce storm of the c  
final figures are  
several hundred p  
to attend th  
George

SMITHS FALLS  
storm victims  
County relief  
\$1.65 million  
of  
\$1.65 million

Small businesses will get help  
operation of a tourism business, cleaning damaged inventory, repair of essential clean-up of ice storm damage (eg. broken windows).  
Claim forms are available in both English and French.  
Claim forms will also be available in both English and French.  
Disaster Relief Committee offices

# City and district

## Help available for damages to woodlots

By MARK CALDER  
Writer

...ers who have fallen through the cracks relief effort have been given a \$3.5 ...k Henry, co-ordinator of the ... Council. ...rces (MNR) has an- ...vide owners of ... and finan- ...viable

... can help replace the tr  
... me out and help on Oct

## Order your 1999 trees n

R TCK - It may still be the summer but it's time to think of spring  
...age to our forests left behind by the Ice Storm, it is now time to  
...ur future forests. South Nation Conservation is well into its 1999  
... program. This past spring 40,000 trees were planted by SNC and  
... 00 by private landowners. The majority of the trees were sup  
... ly opened G. Howard Ferguson Forestry station in Kemptonville.  
... is now accepting seedling orders. The earlier your order is pla  
... your chances you have at procuring the species you want. The s  
... to 25¢ depending on the amount ordered. For orders over 1,000 see  
... a tree planting program. For landowners requiring our tree plant  
... staff is available to meet with you to ensure that the proper spec  
... r site. For more information please contact André Patry at (613) 238-1111

... were victims of  
... li sters and disease,  
... r removed to make  
... buildings and park-  
... now many are suc-  
... old age.

... is your chance to  
... some of our  
... ly citizens, and  
... mark on your  
... y for the 21st centu-  
... may entice a  
... ic encourage a

projects  
announced

CORNWALL

Tensions run high at  
public meeting  
Feb 18/98  
Feb 5/98

### THANK YOU

... survived the "Ice Storm of 98" with the help and support of Jim Earl  
... shared his generator with us, Bill, Mike and Mark Dwyre  
... who gave of their time and energy to help move  
... Paul Wainick and his crew were always  
... "good news"  
... loss.

## Before you plant a tree, you should ask for its pedigree

In his letter ("Region was right to  
ject offer of free bush-grown tree  
Oct. 22), R. A. Cunningham m  
some good points about the quality  
vigour of a cultivated tree's roots  
crown - they do help a tree bec  
established more quickly. They  
make the logistics of planting eas  
plan (a)

## Students twig to ecology by planting a forest

Seedlings intended to help replace ice-damaged trees

Soon after they scrambled off their school bus, some of the Grade 6 students told a forest of trees are ree  
and 6

## Mennonites donate time

cle

By Sama  
The Revie

Groups  
working in  
dents cle

22 THE RECORD NEWS, Smiths Falls, Ont., February 4, 1998

# NEWS

## ... provides tips for ice-damaged trees

Leeds and Grenville Disaster Relief Fund  
Preliminary Damage Estimate Form

This form will be used as a *preliminary* report of uninsured claims. You will be contacted by a claims adjustor as soon as possible following receipt of this form. This information will be confidential. Please print clearly.

CLAIMANT

Name of Person making the claim \_\_\_\_\_

Full address of property where loss occurred \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Business Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality (Township, Town, Village or City) \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY INSURANCE INFORMATION

Name of Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_ Policy # \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance/Broker/Agent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

DETAILS OF COSTS AND LOSSES

Describe briefly losses of **essential** property and expenses for **necessities**:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Estimate of losses/expenses **not covered by insurance**  
**or any other programs:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CLAIM: (please check one)

Residential \_\_\_\_\_ Small Business \_\_\_\_\_ Farm \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF CLAIMANT \_\_\_\_\_

Before February 27, 1998 Send to:  
**Leeds and Grenville  
Disaster Relief Committee  
32 Wall Street, Brockville, Ontario  
K6V 4R9**

**or bring to your  
Town or City Hall or  
Municipal Clerk's Office**

(For office use only - Claim # \_\_\_\_\_ date received \_\_\_\_\_ Initials \_\_\_\_\_)

(French language forms available upon request)



# Application for Assistance for Losses and Damages Resulting from the Eastern Ontario Ice Storm

EODRC file no.

**Instructions:**

1. Please fill in all appropriate answers on this form. Print clearly. Refer to Guidelines for Applications for Private Property Claims.
2. If you require assistance or have questions about this form, contact your Local Disaster Relief Committee. (See attached listing)
3. If your claim is for emergency living expenses only, please include receipts and details of the emergency costs (such as food, clothing, etc.) that have not been recovered from other agencies.
4. If you are in extreme financial hardship due to the ice storm, call the Eastern Ontario Disaster Relief Committee. (See attached listing)
5. Attach all necessary receipts to completed form and forward to your Local Disaster Relief Committee by June 15, 1998.

The applicant agrees to the collection of personal information contained in or required by this form by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, authorized as part of the disaster relief program. The information may be used to verify the claim or in an audit. Questions about the collection of personal information may be addressed to Elizabeth Fulton, Ice Storm Recovery Unit Co-ordinator, Eastern Regional Office, Regional Operations Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 1-800-267-9438.

Local Municipality (City, Town, Township)			<b>For Office Use Only</b>	
Last name	First name	Telephone number (home) (     )	Telephone number (business) (     )	
Mailing address		Postal code		
Street address or lot and concession		Tax roll number		
<b>Residential</b>				
No. of persons at this address				
I am:				
<input type="checkbox"/> registered owner <input type="checkbox"/> agent of the owner <input type="checkbox"/> tenant (claiming for personal items only)				
If the applicant is not the owner, give the name and address of the owner:				
Last name		First name		Telephone number (home) (     )
Address				
<b>Business Owner</b> <input type="checkbox"/> full-time business <input type="checkbox"/> part-time business (50% or less of net income)				No. of consecutive days without power
Type of business		No. of employees <input type="checkbox"/> 100 or less <input type="checkbox"/> more than 100		PST No.
				GST No.
<b>Farmer</b> <input type="checkbox"/> full-time farmer <input type="checkbox"/> part-time farmer (50% or less of gross income)				Farm Business Reg. No. (if applicable)
<b>Ice damage</b> <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		<b>Loss of power</b> <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		Date of loss of power
				No. of days without power
Have you received disaster relief funds from any other organization (municipality, OMAFRA, MEDTT, Red Cross)?				
<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		Source		Amount \$
Do you have insurance for any of your losses?    If not, please provide explanation.				
<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no				
Has your insurer paid all or part of your losses? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> awaiting response			What part of your losses has the insurer not paid and what were the stated reasons for non-payment?	
Do you have a copy of any adjuster's report or any other documentation to establish your claim prepared for your insurer? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no    If yes, please attach.				
I hereby authorize and direct my insurer named below to cooperate fully with EODRC, the Ontario Government and their authorized representatives and to provide them with any information or documents they may request concerning coverage available and losses paid or not paid under the policy referred to below.				
Signature			Date	
Name of the insurance company which provides your homeowners / business / farm insurance			Claim no.	
Name of insurance agent / broker				
Address			Policy no.	

Type of claim:  Residential  Business  Farm/Agricultural  Non-profit  Emergency living expenses only

Type of loss and amount being claimed:

Type of loss	Description and damage	Amount claimed
1.1 Full time residence building		\$
1.2 Other residential buildings		\$
1.3 Household and personal effects		\$
1.4 Emergency living expenses		\$
1.5 Other (describe)		\$
<b>Residential</b>		
2.1 Farm buildings		\$
2.2 Livestock		\$
2.3 Farm equipment		\$
2.4 Household and personal effects		\$
2.5 Other (describe)		\$
<b>Farm</b>		
3.1 Building		\$
3.2 Furniture and fixtures		\$
3.3 Equipment		\$
3.4 Inventory		\$
3.5 Other (describe)		\$
<b>Business/Non-Profit</b>		
If space above is insufficient, additional information may be attached to the claim.		<b>Total</b>
		\$

**Declaration**

I declare/understand

- that all of the information provided in this application is true and that it will be subject to audit
- that records will be maintained for a period of 2 years
- that all costs claimed herein will not be claimed for under any other insurance or assistance program
- that I may be required, as verification of the business or farm status set out herein, to submit to EODRC's authorized representative, my income tax return, or any part of it sufficient to determine the percentage of my gross income derived from farming, agricultural or business activities. Such information will be kept strictly confidential, and not disclosed to any other person, except to the Government of Ontario for disaster relief program audit purposes, without my consent.
- that if any part of this claim is found to be false, Ontario may demand immediate repayment from the recipient and may avail itself of any legal remedies which it deems appropriate to recover repayment of the funds from the recipient.

This claim is subject to review and assessment. Ineligible costs will be deducted from the total amount of the claim submitted.

\_\_\_\_\_ (applicant's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (date)