

Durham man improving water quality in tsunami-ravaged Sri Lanka

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(DURHAM) – Dr. Roddy Tempest keeps a bag packed with ready-made meals, a global positioning receiver and camping equipment waiting for disaster.

After the South Asian tsunami last month, the Durham resident knew to expect a call.

Tempest is the top water purification engineer for AmeriCares, a nonprofit charity.

The veteran of previous world disasters landed in Colombo, Sri Lanka last week. Since then he has traveled in a helicopter up and down the island nation's devastated eastern coast, where more than 31,000 people likely died when the series of giant waves crashed ashore the day after Christmas.



When a pocket of survivors is spotted from the air, the military chopper sets down to assess their needs and help distribute some of the two million individual water treatment kits.

AmeriCares plans to purify 22 million liters.

Tempest says his responsibility is to "keep the survivors alive."

Tempest is chairman and CEO of [Tempest Environmental Systems](#) of Durham.

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