

# THE NEWS & OBSERVER

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## Durham man has water plan

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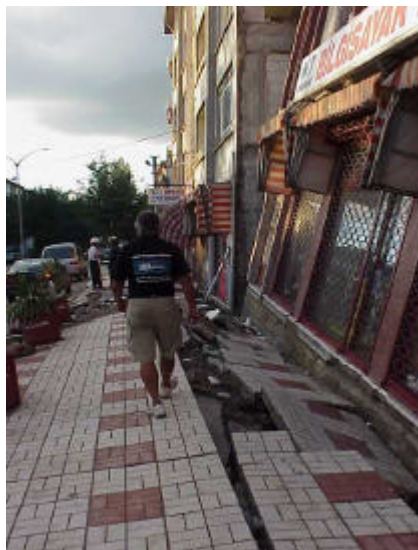
A week before the earthquake in Turkey, Dr. Roddy Tempest stood before a group of federal disaster workers and unveiled his plan.

The world is not getting any gentler, the Durham businessman told workers in the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. With tornados, terrorists and earthquakes looming, he said, now is the time to prepare.

The agency went for the pitch and signed a \$250,000 contract with Tempest Environmental Systems, which builds water purification systems for disaster sites.



*A group of Turkish citizens look over the damage caused by the earthquake in the city of Izmit, southeast of Istanbul*



*A Tempest Environmental Systems' engineer surveys the damage along a business district*

Tempest flew Sunday to Turkey on Monday began setting up the filtration system. He knew this mission would be different, even before he got off the plane.

"Turkish officials came on the plane and walked right up to my seat," Tempest said Monday by satellite phone. "They said, 'Are you Dr. Tempest?'"

"I said 'Yes.' I thought I had done something wrong."

The officials whisked him off the plane, he said, and past customs agents without so much as a nod.

"They took me into a war room, where everything is coordinated," Tempest said. "Then they looked at me and said, 'What is your plan? Can you help us?'"

The Turkish people are desperate, Tempest said, and it would be easy to feel panicked in the face of such need. But he has dealt with emergencies before. Three months ago he flew to Albania, where he installed a water system for about 20,000 refugees from the violence in Kosovo, said Corey Taylor, the company's marketing director.

The Turkish system will need to serve about 450,000 victims and will take a couple of weeks to install.

"We haven't gone into the epicenter zone yet, but from what I'm hearing, it's bad," Tempest said from Istanbul. "What we have to do is go with the numbers, but remember we're dealing with people."

The only way to get that perspective is to rise above the situation, literally.

"I met with the minister of the interior today," Tempest said. "He has arranged to provide a private helicopter to fly over the quake zone, all along the fault line. From the air we'll try to determine where the greatest concentrations of survivors are."

Once the survivors are found, Tempest will move in for closer observation.

Water sampling is the key, Tempest said.

When the earth moves, underground pipes of all kinds burst, mixing waste and water. That means more opportunity for outbreaks of cholera and other infectious diseases.

"All the water is contaminated," Tempest said. "Eighty percent of all disease is water-borne, and it is very hot and humid here. Perfect conditions to incubate microorganisms."

After the water sampling reveals the cleanest areas, workers will install three water-purifying units, which together will pump out about a half-million gallons of clean water a day. Workers will dig latrines far enough from the population to prevent contamination, and drill wells for water, if necessary.

Until then, Tempest said, there will be no rest.

"We'll work 24 hours a day, three days straight until we collapse," he said. "Then we'll work 18-hour days until we're done."



*Dr. Roddy Tempest, Chairman and CEO of Tempest Environmental Systems, samples water in Turkey*