

# Ottawa Mayor Says Doug Ford & The Province Will Totally Pay Off The City's Storm Cleanup

The mayor's office says costs are "in the millions".

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson says that Premier Doug Ford has promised to completely foot the bill for the city's storm cleanup, which will likely cost millions.

In a press conference on Wednesday, May 25, Watson thanked the premier and the province for their speedy action in supporting the city following the derecho storm.

According to Watson, Ontario will be sending 40 firefighters from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry to help with the cleanup. He added that the province's cleanup efforts would start on Saturday and could last for several more weeks.

"I also spoke this morning with Premier Ford and he assured me that the full cost of the storm cleanup will be covered by the province," Watson said during the press conference. "I appreciate that very much."

"We're talking millions not hundreds of thousands of dollars, but millions because of all the labour costs overtime when we bring people in from other jurisdictions—we've obviously got to pay for their travel and accommodation and meals," Watson said in a May 26 press conference. "So, this is a very expensive undertaking."

## **The aftermath of the storm is more severe than originally thought**

On May 26, Hydro Ottawa revealed in the same press conference that the damage caused by the storm was actually four to five times worse than the city's 1998 ice storm and the 2018 tornadoes. As of Thursday afternoon, about 43,000 hydro users still had no power in the city. The City of Ottawa said that its emergency centres saw 1,300 visits on May 24.

In an email to Narcity, Ford's office said that it will continue to work closely with the City of Ottawa to help people get back on their feet.

"Our priority right now is ensuring power is restored to everyone who's been impacted by the storm," said a representative for Ford's office. "The premier has remained in contact with Mayor Watson about any assistance they require."

Watson also announced that the City of Ottawa will be giving \$1.9 million of social services money to 20 community organizations to increase food access throughout the city.