



A week later

from

Mayor Dan Alexander

**SENECA STRONG HAS NEVER
HAD DEEPER MEANING FOR US**



On Monday April 13, our town experienced several severe weather alerts throughout the night. As my family and I were seeking shelter in our basement, I was aware that simultaneously many families across the town were also seeking similar shelter. As I prayed with my family, I sought comfort as well as blessing for all those going through this horrible event. Shortly after the storm had passed, our City Administrator Scott Moulder called to inform me that our city had taken a direct hit, and that he was on the way to help assess the damage.

Just minutes later, as Mr. Moulder and I were leaving my driveway, we could clearly tell that even through the pitch darkness there was an abundance of debris and a clear need for help in several areas. We carefully made our way to the Fire Department to meet with the Chief, and arrived just as the Command Center was being set up, along with several storm emergency teams as well as volunteer firemen. We knew the damage was extensive, and eagerly awaited first light so that we could begin to help the residents of our slumbering community, largely unaware of the troubles they would soon be faced with. With the help of Jeff Bright, we were able to use a drone for an aerial view of the damaged areas, showing not only the path of the storm, but also its devastating wake of destruction. From there, we then left the Fire Station to further assess the damage first-hand. As I saw homes moved across streets, downed power lines, blocked roads, and hundred-year old trees up-rooted, I began to worry if the storm debris was simply too much to be cleared.

As this week has unfolded, I have only seen the opposite. The support, outreach, love, and encouragement I have witnessed this community bestow upon one another is something I can say is truly remarkable. We have been blessed by the outpouring of love and compassion by volunteers near and far that have come to lend a much needed helping hand. The generosity from churches, businesses, students, and several other chapters of the community have meant so much to those affected by this unfortunate act. From landscaping to laundry, hot meals or cool places to store perishable goods, we depended on and cared after one another without complaint or selfish ambition; the needs were presented and met with unyielding grace and self-sacrifice.

In addition to the help and support of this community, I want to personally thank our City's Team. Everyone has gone above and beyond their call of duty in order to help those around them, and though these thanks is only a small offer of gratitude, know that your services are truly and greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank our County and State leaders, as well as our serving military that have allowed us the manpower and resources to accomplish this tremendous task in such a timely manner. Without all your support, this surely would have been a much graver catastrophe, and I am truly indebted to the faithfulness and generosity of the community I am so proud to serve.

As this week draws to a close and many of us are still cleaning up our debris, I know that the coming weeks will bring about many changes. But never let us forget, that while we may rebuild and replace, we will always remain #SENECA STRONG.