



Mayor orders zoning review after propane fire

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In the wake of yesterday's propane explosion and fire, Mayor David Miller has ordered a top-to-bottom reassessment of the Toronto's zoning bylaws.

Miller also said the Ontario government needs to look into the way its inspectors oversees propane facilities.

"I've met with city staff this morning and I've directed a complete review of our zoning bylaws to determine whether there need to be changes with respect to the safety of facilities of this nature," Miller told the Toronto Star in an interview at his office.

Miller said he has placed a call today to Ontario Community Safety Minister Rick Bartolucci to ask about the performance of the Technical Safety and Standards Authority (TSSA), which oversees propane facilities.

"From my perspective, the province needs to co-operate with the city on a joint assessment of what happened," he said. "Public safety has to be paramount."

Miller flew to Toronto last night from Vancouver, where he was on holiday, and went immediately to York University to visit people who took shelter there when the fire forced them from their homes.

People were very calm, they were patient," he said.

Miller also had words of praise for the city's emergency services personnel, citing their competence and professionalism.

However, he has questions about whether the rules that permitted the propane facility to operate need to be changed.

"I think it's an entirely reasonable question to ask whether facilities of this type should be located within 1.6 kilometres of a residential zone," he said.

Miller said her has been told the Sunrise facility is legal. The operators had written to the city in 2006 to ensure that they were operating in accordance with municipal bylaws, and was told they were, he said.

But Miller said some residents he spoke to last night questioned the way the facility was run.

"Several of them had direct questions about the operation of this site, and direct concern that they'd seen," he said.

"What they'd seen was, they'd seen flames there, they'd seen employees smoking and they'd seen unsafe operation of vehicles."