

Burnaby firm to furnish 140 shelters for quake victims

BY FRANK LUBA
STAFF REPORTER

A Burnaby company is providing 140 temporary shelters for use in earthquake-ravaged Haiti.

The 350-square-foot structures from Weatherhaven have an aluminum frame with a tan-coloured fabric cover and can be erected in 30 minutes.

They were designed for use as field hospitals, but company CEO Ray Castelli said they can also serve as offices or accommodation.

They are being sold at cost, which Castelli said was about \$1 million, for use by international relief agencies in Haiti. They were to be loaded and shipped by air Saturday, again at cost, by Weatherhaven's usual transportation company, Perishables in Richmond, to Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic.

"They pretty much fill the cargo area up on a [Boeing] 767," said Castelli of the shelters.

The shelters are being transported on cargo-net-covered pallets that will be trucked from the Dominican Republic to Haiti because of the congestion at the airport in Port-au-Prince.

They will be used there by groups such as the UN.



Ray Castelli, CEO of Weatherhaven, stands with a portable shelter in Burnaby on Friday. Portable-shelter-manufacturer Weatherhaven is supplying \$1-million worth of portable field hospitals for use by an international aid agency working in Haiti. ARLEN REDEKOP — THE PROVINCE

"It was fortunate that we happened to have 140 of these units in surplus and ready to go when this terrible disaster hit," said Castelli.

The shelters had been designed for the Australian military for relief in disasters such as the Sumatra earthquake.

"At the last minute they decided they wanted to change some of the elements," explained Castelli.

After a settlement was reached and new shelters constructed, his company was left with the surplus field hospitals that have double-door breezeways

to allow easy entry for stretchers.

"They're shaped like a Volkswagen Beetle," said Castelli.

But the arch-like structures are also robust and have been used everywhere from the Arctic to Afghanistan.

fluba@theprovince.com