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## Toronto unveils municipal strike plan



Garbage workers clean up along Spadina Avenue after Toronto's last garbage strike in 2002.

Pools to be closed, garbage left at the curb, if workers walk off the job Monday

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Curbside garbage collection, city run daycares, community centres and much of city hall will be shut down as early as next week if Toronto's indoor and outdoor workers walk off the job, city officials confirmed Wednesday.

The city's contingency plan, unveiled at a press conference this afternoon, suggests life could become very bumpy for many Torontonians, from parents with children in the city's 57 child care centres to anyone who needs a building permit, parking tag -- even permission to take wedding photos in the city's parks.

A strike deadline of 12:01 a.m. Monday hangs over talks between the city and Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 79, which represents 18,000 indoor workers, and Local 416, representing 6,200 outdoor workers. They include garbage collectors, daycare employees, paramedics and parks and recreation staff.

Should they walk, curbside garbage collection in Toronto, Scarborough, North York and East York, as well as green bin organics and recycling collection, will be cancelled. Residents in apartment buildings and Etobicoke will be spared because, unlike the rest of the city, their garbage collection is performed by private contractors.

As in the 2002 garbage strike, two transfer stations will accept double-bagged residential and commercial garbage 24-hours a day. Residential waste will be accepted free of charge; commercial waste will be subject to a \$100-per-tonne tip fee.

Another five transfer stations will open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week. More residential

drop-off locations will be announced if the strike lasts longer than five days

Other services and programs that will be cancelled or closed in the event of a labour disruption:

- All 57 child care centres directly operated by Toronto Children's Services.
- All recreational programming, including camps, classes, clubs and walking tours
- Community and fitness centres, as well as all city operated indoor and outdoor swimming pools, golf courses, wading pools, greenhouses and conservatories.
- All permits in parks, tennis courts, outdoor sports fields and civic squares will be cancelled, as will city programs in community schools
- All scheduled meetings of council, community councils, standing and advisory committees will be cancelled.
- Public access to City Hall, the North York Civic Centre, Metro Hall, York Civic Centre and Scarborough Civic Centre will be restricted to ground floors only, and visitors can expect to have to cross picket lines.
- All city run scheduled events on Nathan Phillips Square, Metro Square and other civic squares will be cancelled.
- Street cleaning and routine repairs on road, sidewalks and bridges will be suspended.
- Routine permits will not be issued, including for building, parking, utility work, film, temporary street closings and wedding photos in parks.
- City-run museums and art galleries will be closed
- Toronto Island ferry service will not run. Alternative arrangements will be made for residents of the islands.

A number of services won't be affected, including Toronto Police, Fire, TTC and the city's homes for the aged. While Toronto EMS will continue to respond to emergency calls, non-emergency and low priority calls may be affected.

Wedding ceremonies will continue during regular business hours at Toronto City Hall, which will also accept new bookings. Only scheduled ceremonies will take place at North York Civic Centre, which won't accept new bookings through the strike. Wedding facilities in Scarborough, East York and York civic centres will be closed.

A handful of arenas and community centres staffed by boards of management will not be affected.

City officials stressed they want a negotiated settlement with the unions.

"We don't want a strike and don't believe a strike is necessary," said City Manager Joe Pennachetti.

After the city briefing, a spokeswoman for the two civic union locals said of the parties "they are continuing to talk and everyone is working hard to try and reach a negotiated settlement."

Pat Daley added "we still have an obstacle of concessions on the table by the city that have not been changed at all." She declined to go into detail about issues on the table, such as changes in sick leave, but said she was "not aware" of any exchange of monetary offers.

City spokesman Kevin Sack said the city is willing to negotiate through the unions' strike deadline, should the unions agree.

A spokesman for the city's 4,000 non-union employees, many of whom would carry on key services such as water supply and sewage treatment during a strike, said "morale is not high."

Richard Majkot, executive director of the administrative, professional and supervisory association, cited a cost of living pay freeze this year and a one per cent rise in 2010.

“Our members are still professionals,” he said. “They will be there to assist the city.

“The will may not be as strong and they may not be as eager as they normally would be to help the city, but they are going to be there,” said Mr. Majkot.

[More information on the city's contingency plans.](#)