MEDIA RELEASE

Ontario Unionized Pipefitters Going on Strike

Work stoppage is first in the sector in more than 30 years

WHITBY, Ont. (May 31, 2019) — With contract negotiations at an impasse, Ontario’s 12,000 unionized plumbers and steamfitters are headed for their first strike in more than three decades.

The Ontario Pipe Trades Council was hopeful they would see some movement on the position taken by the Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario (MCAO), but the management side has been entrenched on a key issue and has not been willing to move. Because of management’s demands, as of midnight tonight Ontario’s unionized pipe trade workers will be on strike.

“It would be a misnomer to call this round of talks a negotiation,” says Ross Tius, chairman of the OPTC bargaining committee. “We have met with the contractors several times over the past few months, and they have not been willing to compromise or change their position. They want to drastically change the working conditions of our members, and that is unacceptable to us.”

The contractors are seeking significant changes to the hours a plumber or steamfitter works.

The current work week allows the contractor the flexibility in scheduling work which also allows our members to schedule personal appointments and training classes without a loss of employment hours — it’s a benefit to both sides.

“Instead of working with us, the MCAO has taken an adversarial approach and is forcing our membership to go on strike to protect one of our core values,” says Jim Hogarth, Business Manager of the Ontario Pipe Trades Council. “It’s a sad day when after 30 years of relative labour harmony between our two organizations that they have taken this hardline approach.”

For more information, contact office@OPTC.org.

About the Ontario Pipe Trades Council

The Ontario Pipe Trades Council is the representative body for the skilled plumbing and mechanical professionals in Ontario. It is driven to promote the technical, commercial and environmental benefits of the pipe trades and maximize their use in the construction industry, while building interest in career opportunities in the plumbing, steamfitting, welding, sprinkler fitting, refrigeration and HVA trades in the province of Ontario.

For more information, please contact

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