

CITY WALKOUT AFTERMATH: THE WAITING

Residents left to hold noses until services resume

Most services unlikely to start up again before this weekend at the earliest

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Daniel Dale
Donovan Vincent
STAFF REPORTERS

Don't put your garbage out on the curb just yet. And don't even think about shipping the kids back to daycare this week.

Despite tentative agreements forged yesterday between the city and its striking workers, most municipal services are unlikely to resume until the weekend at the earliest. The city won't release plans until after the deals are ratified.

Members of CUPE Local 416 and Local 79 will vote on their agreements tomorrow. Should they vote to ratify, city council will hold its own ratification vote Friday.

"It will take several days in many operations and program areas before the city can offer full service to residents and businesses," city officials said in a news release. "For example, swimming pools must be cleaned and refilled, child-care centres must be reopened, cleaned and stocked with food, parks need maintenance and grass cutting, licence renewals and inspection applications must be processed, and many other matters must be addressed."

City manager Joe Pennachetti said the city will provide "pages" of service resumption plans to the media and on the city's website once the agreements are ratified.

Windsor's 101-day strike ended Friday. Yesterday, community centres there opened their doors and garbage pickup began. Municipal pools and camps, however, were not expected to reopen before next week.

In 2002, Toronto rapidly returned to some semblance of normality after striking workers were legislated back to work on a Thursday in August. Island ferry service resumed the next day as ambulance service returned to regular levels and golf courses reopened; day camps and daycares reopened Monday; indoor pools reopened by Sunday, outdoor pools by Monday.

Street garbage bins and temporary garbage dumps were cleaned over the weekend; household waste collection began on the next scheduled collection day.

According to an unscientific sampling of Yonge St. pedestrians conducted yesterday, it is the city's garbage situation that Torontonians overwhelmingly want resolved most quickly. But they will have to wait: temporary dump sites will continue to operate until further notice, said Mayor David Miller.

Miller urged residents to keep their trash at home for a few more days if they can. The cleanup of the temporary dumps will not take long, he said, but the process cannot begin until council ratification.



STEVE RUSSELL/TORONTO STAR FILE PHOTO

Temporary dump sites such as Moss Park will operate until further notice, said Mayor David Miller.

That approval cannot come quickly enough for Tanisha King, 9, or her grandmother Leanne King. Tanisha, a competitive gymnast, has missed a month's worth of cancelled sessions. In the absence of municipal pools, her grandmother has struggled to entertain her.

"We go to the pool every day in summer," said Leanne King.

"We went down to the beach, but it's not very clean."