

Sick days still a sticking point

Worker won't forgo banked time for latest contract offer from city

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STAFF REPORTER

If the striking municipal workers had accepted the city's latest offer, David would have received \$700 for his 82 unused sick days.

After the parks employee did the math, he decided the deal just wasn't worth it.

"I would rather keep the sick days. They're worth a lot more than the city's offering," said David, who declined to give his last name, saying the union has asked its members not to speak with the press.

David has worked for the city for about nine years.

Had he worked a couple more months – and passed the 10-year mark – he would get about \$33 for each of his banked sick day instead of \$9.

As the strike enters its 24th day, a major sticking point continues to be the city's desire to curb the banking of sick days, which currently provides up to six months' pay when employees retire.

Mayor David Miller presented his latest offer Friday on the city's website; the union representing striking city workers criticized the mayor for publicizing contract negotiations.

So far, the city's website, which allows workers to calculate their sick-leave payout and salary increase, has had 30,000 hits.

Yet when the *Star* visited three temporary dump sites yesterday, several picketers said they had not visited the website because union officials had deemed the deal inferior.

"I think that's just ignorant on their part," David said.

"In some respects, I applaud what the mayor's done.

"I think I should be able to see the offer, not just hear about it from the union."



ADRIEN VECZAN/TORONTO STAR

David, who works for Parks and Recreation, would have received \$700 for his 82 unused sick days under the city's latest contract offer to striking city workers.