

Official complaint lodged over dumps

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Last Updated: 2nd July 2009, 3:51pm

They've called the dump the pits, now they're hoping the Ministry of the Environment will do something about it. Friends of Christie Pits Park told the *Sun* they have lodged a complaint with the ministry this morning after days of dumping in their Bloor St. W. park.

Members of the group and local residents have held protests around the park's outdoor rink since the City of Toronto began using it as a temporary dump site for the ongoing civic workers strike.

Group member Himy Syed says the basis of the complaint is that the city is violating its permit to operate a temporary dump site and the toxins contained in the garbage pose an environmental hazard to people and animals in the area.

Since Monday, neighbourhood protesters and CUPE picketers have blocked a pest control company contracted by the city to spray the site a total of five times.

Late today, Dr. David McKeown – the city's medical officer of health – appealed to residents not to block pest control workers from the temporary sites.

"While I appreciate there are concerns about the use of pesticides, I am satisfied that the city is taking the necessary precautions to ensure pesticides are applied in a way that minimizes any risk to public health," McKeown stated in a release.

"I will continue to review the situation at Christie Pits and other locations on a day to day basis."

McKeown said if necessary he will use his authority under the Health Protection and Promotion Act to order the city to follow specific requirements in dealing with the garbage sites and preventing health hazards like rodent and insect infestations.

Last week, McKeown told reporters the piles of stinky trash aren't in themselves health hazards.

"It may be unattractive and cause odour, which can certainly be unpleasant, but this in itself does not pose a threat to public health," he said, noting a private company has been contracted by the city to manage pest numbers at the temporary garbage dumps.