

News Release

For Immediate Release
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STRIKING HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS VOTE IN FAVOUR OF SETTLEMENT

OAKVILLE — Striking heavy equipment operators who work on projects across Essex and Kent Counties have voted to accept a new four-year contract settlement with the Heavy Construction Association of Windsor.

The operators, represented by Local 793 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, voted in favour of the contract at a ratification meeting on Wednesday.

“I am pleased that our union and the employers were able to reach a settlement,” said Local 793 Business Manager Mike Gallagher. “The employers had sought concessions from our members on hours of work and overtime, but there will be no changes to the existing language on those issues.”

The operators had been on strike since May 28, 2012. They had been working without a contract since April 30, 2012.

The employers had sought to extend the regular work week for operators doing certain sewer and watermain work and all general excavation work from the current 50 hours before overtime is paid to 55 hours before overtime provisions kick. The Employment Standards Act states that overtime pay for sewer and watermain work must be paid for all hours worked in excess of 50 hours in a work week at an amount not less than one and one-half the employee’s regular rate.

Gallagher said it was disappointing that it took a strike to get to an agreement.

“Nobody wanted a strike, but we have no alternative. Our members merely wanted to be paid in accordance with the provincial standards, which is what the new collective agreement requires.”

The contract is retroactive to May 1, 2012, and will expire April 30, 2016. It provides operators with incremental monetary package increases totaling of \$4.30 an hour over the life of the contract.

Gallagher noted that Local 793 received support from the general public and a number of unions during the strike, including teachers unions, the CAW, the Teamsters and Local 625 of LIUNA.

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“I would like to thank all the union members and are residents who supported us on the picket lines. We are grateful for their support.”

Local 793 of the International Union of Operating Engineers represents thousands of highly-skilled crane and heavy equipment operators across Ontario. The union has a head office, banquet hall and training campus in Oakville, and another training campus in Morrisburg.

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