

**THE TORONTO SUN** NEW HOMES & CONDOS

# What you need to know about the housing strikes

Q&A with Richard Lyall, President of Residential Construction Council of Ontario



RICHARD LYALL  
**RESCON**

Many new-home buyers are aware that there have been residential construction strikes since May 2 that could potentially cause delays for occupancy.

Labour disputes are inherently unpredictable and lend themselves to rumours and misinformation so we thought we'd answer the most common questions posed to builders this month.

As the association speaking on behalf of builders across the GTA, we thought it would be a good idea to answer eight questions commonly asked during the first week of the strikes (this was published Wednesday, May 11 as New Homes and Condos went to press - please check rescon.com for collective bargaining updates).

Q: What trades are involved in the strikes?

A: There are four trades on strike: the framing and tile trades represented by Local 183, and the drywall and trim trades represented by the Carpenters. Due to the nature of construction, it's difficult to come up with a firm number but we'd estimate approximately 7,000 workers. The employers are represented by four sub-trade industry asso-

ciations - Residential Framing Contractors Association, Residential Tile Contractors Association, Interior Contractors Association and Trim Association of Ontario. Just to be clear, builders do not have a seat at the bargaining table.

Q: When do you think the strikes will end?

A: The strikes must end Wednesday, June 15, as mandated by specific labour legislation. They can end sooner if both sides can resolve this at the bargaining table or refer the matter to arbitration.

Q: What are the geographical boundaries of the strikes?

A: Different collective agreements are specific to different geographical areas. In general, the area affected is Burlington in the west, Simcoe County in the north and Durham Region in the east.

Q: How many new homes will be affected by the strikes?

A: It's very difficult to say because we are unsure of how long the strike will last. There are hundreds of new homes under construction in the affected area. We will continue to monitor the process and provide updates as they become available at rescon.com.

Q: Will the strikes delay my

occupancy date?

A: At this stage, it is very difficult to say as the answer is dependent on several factors, including: the length of the work stoppage; what stage of construction your house is at; and, whether your builder is impacted by the strike. The houses that are being affected most by the strike are the ones that haven't been framed. It is possible that builders can catch up on time missed due to strikes over the course of the months that you are waiting for your home.

Q: What kind of compensation am I entitled to as a result of strikes-related delays?

A: New-home buyers are not entitled to compensation as a result of delays caused by strikes which constitute "unavoidable delays" and/or "outstanding circumstances." Please read the terms and conditions in your purchase agreement. In addition, contact the Tarion new-home warranty program if you need more information. Go to tarion.com.

Q: Why is RESCON involved?

A: RESCON represents approximately 150 GTA home builders in low-rise and about 100 in high-rise. Our members rely on trades affected by the strikes so we have been monitoring the situation.

Q: What message do home builders have for new-home buyers right now?

A: Labour disruptions are undesirable for everybody involved. We had been hopeful that negotiating efforts by sub-trade employers and the four unionized trades would have resulted in ratified agreements, but that didn't happen. We will continue to keep builder members and their customers informed.

For more information, please email media@rescon.com or visit rescon.com.

— Richard Lyall, president of the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), has represented the building industry in Ontario since 1991. Contact him at 905-760-7777. Visit rescon.com.



It's estimated about 7,000 workers in the framing, tile, drywall and trim trades are involved in current strike action.

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