



## **Goderich Workers Locked Out of Jobs Before Christmas**

GODERICH, Ont., 11 December 2017 – Thirteen Goderich families are facing a bleak holiday season after ASAP Secured Inc. locked out its employees without warning.

The ASAP Secured employees, members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 9597, reported to work Sunday to discover they were suddenly locked out of their jobs.

“It is shocking for an employer to make such a spiteful decision, just days before Christmas,” said Marty Warren, USW Ontario Director.

“The workers were given no warning that they were being locked out. The union was informed by the employer after the lockout began,” Warren said.

“This is an unnecessary move by a company that for months has refused to negotiate a fair collective agreement with its employees.”

The workers are employed by ASAP Secured, which has a contract to provide security services at the Compass Minerals operations in Goderich.

After joining the USW in 2016, the workers have been trying to negotiate their first collective agreement for several months. In June, they voted 100% to reject a substandard contract offer from the company.

The major issue in the negotiations is wages.

“Despite attempts at mediation and offers from the union to reach a compromise, the company has refused to change its contract offer over the last six months,” Warren noted. “It appears the company wants to maintain a precarious, minimum-wage workforce.”

The company decided to lock out the employees after the union advised that it would be applying for first-contract arbitration as a result of changes made to Ontario’s labour laws under Bill 148.

After the union files its application at the beginning of January, an arbitrated, first-contract settlement could be reached within a few weeks.

“It’s a clear process that will produce a first contract within a mandated timeline. There is no need for this company to lock out its employees in the meantime, other than to impose unnecessary hardship during the holiday season,” Warren said.

“We will support our members and their families throughout this process and ensure they will overcome this employer’s mean-spirited decision.”

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