

## Some Sobeys employees face fines

**Neil Scott**

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The union that represents striking workers at the Sobeys store on South Albert Street is cracking the whip by levying fines against union members who have crossed picket lines and gone back to work.

Brian Haughey, a staff representative with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) said fines have been levied against workers who have crossed picket lines during the strike that has now lasted more than five months.

He declined Friday to get into details about the number of fines levied and the amounts.

That type of information "is one of those internal union things," Haughey said.

The strike began Sept. 11 and the store has remained in business since then with the help of workers who have crossed picket lines.

The company has "come up with some (pay) increases but they're still not where they need to be," Haughey said in an interview earlier this week.

But there has been little or no progress lately in bridging the gap between the company and the union, Haughey said.

A spokesperson for the South Albert Sobeys store said the store is not interested in discussing any aspect of the strike with the news media.

Haughey said he was not in a position to confirm or deny that one of the workers who crossed the picket lines had received a fine in the thousands of dollars.

"That could be true," Haughey said, adding that some of the fines levied could potentially involve substantial amounts of money.

The fines are designed to punish workers who have crossed picket lines and to claw back wages that they received for working during the strike.

Haughey said the union is within its rights under the Trade Union Act to levy fines against people who hurt the union by crossing picket lines.

The Trade Union Act sets out circumstances by which a union could fine a member who crossed a picket line.

A union could potentially sue a member who refused to pay a fine but would not be able to prevent a worker who refused to pay a fine from continuing to work for a company after a strike was settled.

Picket lines have remained in place during the strike and Haughey said the workers on those picket lines are receiving \$180 per week in strike pay.

The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, along with several individual unions, have called for a consumer boycott of the Sobeys store on South Albert Street as well as other Sobeys stores in the province.

As a show of support, members of the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees Union planned to join the striking Sobeys workers on the picket line this weekend.

Larry Hubich, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, said he is raising concerns about the way Sobeys has treated the workers at the South Albert store with other labour leaders

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