



## **NEWS RELEASE**

July 22, 2009

### **Toronto Restaurants Need City Services Restored Now ORHMA Calls On Mayor Miller to Temporarily Use Private Service Providers**

TORONTO – After 31 days of a loss of municipal services and months of ongoing negotiations, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA) is calling on Mayor Miller to take the immediate step of restoring city services through the use of private service providers to temporarily fill current service gaps and to allow for an increased capacity to address growing backlogs in key service areas that serve Toronto’s restaurants.

“The month long city services disruption has been a financial and operational drag on many Toronto restaurants resulting in a loss of revenue across the city. If the parties continue to be unable to reach an agreement and if back-to-work legislation is not pursued, the ORHMA calls on the Mayor to take the immediate step of temporarily contracting private service providers to fill service gaps in areas such as garbage collection to bring back a sense of normalcy to city services that support restaurants” said Tony Elenis, ORHMA President & CEO.

The use of private disposal services have already been utilized by the city during this strike in a targeted fashion during marquee events such as the Pride Parade, Caribana and this week’s Beaches Jazz Festival, to meet shortfalls created by a lack of municipal services and limited volunteers. “These are reasonable arrangements aimed at preventing a loss of business and eliminating the operational uncertainty surrounding these events and their impact on neighbourhood residents and businesses” continued Elenis. “ORHMA is asking that the Mayor make the same temporary arrangements across the city to support restaurants and residents that have been negatively impacted by the work stoppage during the critical summer months.”

Growing backlogs in service areas such as restaurant inspections, business licence applications, building permits and garbage/recycling collection, have resulted in a loss of revenue for a number of the city’s restaurants and has tarnished the image of neighborhoods across the city that have had temporary dump sites established in their communities. After 31 days of a service disruption these backlogs will take weeks to eliminate when the strike ends.

The following are just a few examples of how Toronto restaurants have been negatively impacted by the strike:

- The launch of a new full-service, family restaurant has been put in jeopardy by the lack of inspection services for building approvals which have in turn stalled the processing of the establishment’s liquor licence. Employees are in danger of being laid off in the face of lost revenue.
- A number of hospitality establishments in the west-end of the city have lost thousands of dollars in business due to the cancellation of a swim meet that was to be held at the Etobicoke

Olympium, a municipally run facility. This event was to bring more than a thousand young athletes, coaches and parents from across the province to the city.

- A foodservice establishment on the Toronto Islands that relies heavily on customers from the mainland has experienced a significant loss of revenue due to the loss of ferry service to the islands. The operator estimates he's losing \$40,000 a week and employees say they are making 60 to 70 per cent less than they usually do.

- A popular lakefront café that is usually bustling with customers in the middle of the summer sits empty because of its proximity to a temporary dump site resulting in a significant loss of revenue for the operator and income for employees.

- Due to the loss of the city's "yellow bag" collection service, a downtown pub has had to hire a private waste disposal service to make alternative arrangements for garbage and recycling pick-up. Acquiring these services has resulted in an unexpected cost of hundreds of dollars to the operator.

- A fine dining establishment in the downtown core has had to take employees off regular duties and pay them to drop-off waste at a temporary dump site. When employees arrive at the dump site they experience delays and difficulties crossing picket lines to accessing the drop-off sites.

- Due to park closures and the subsequent adverse impact on numerous recreational teams, a live music venue and café in the east-end has thousands of dollars in team sponsorships tied up over the summer months as these groups are not patronizing the sponsoring establishment.

Last week, ORHMA called on its Toronto member establishments to pitch-in and do what they can to keep the city beautiful recognizing that everyone has a role to play in mitigating the strike's negative impacts.

### **About the ORHMA**

The Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association (ORHMA) is the largest provincial hospitality Association in Canada representing more than 11,000 establishments across the province. For more information on ORHMA visit us on the web at [www.orhma.com](http://www.orhma.com).

For further information contact:

Tony Elenis, President & CEO, 905-361-0268 / 1-800-668-8906