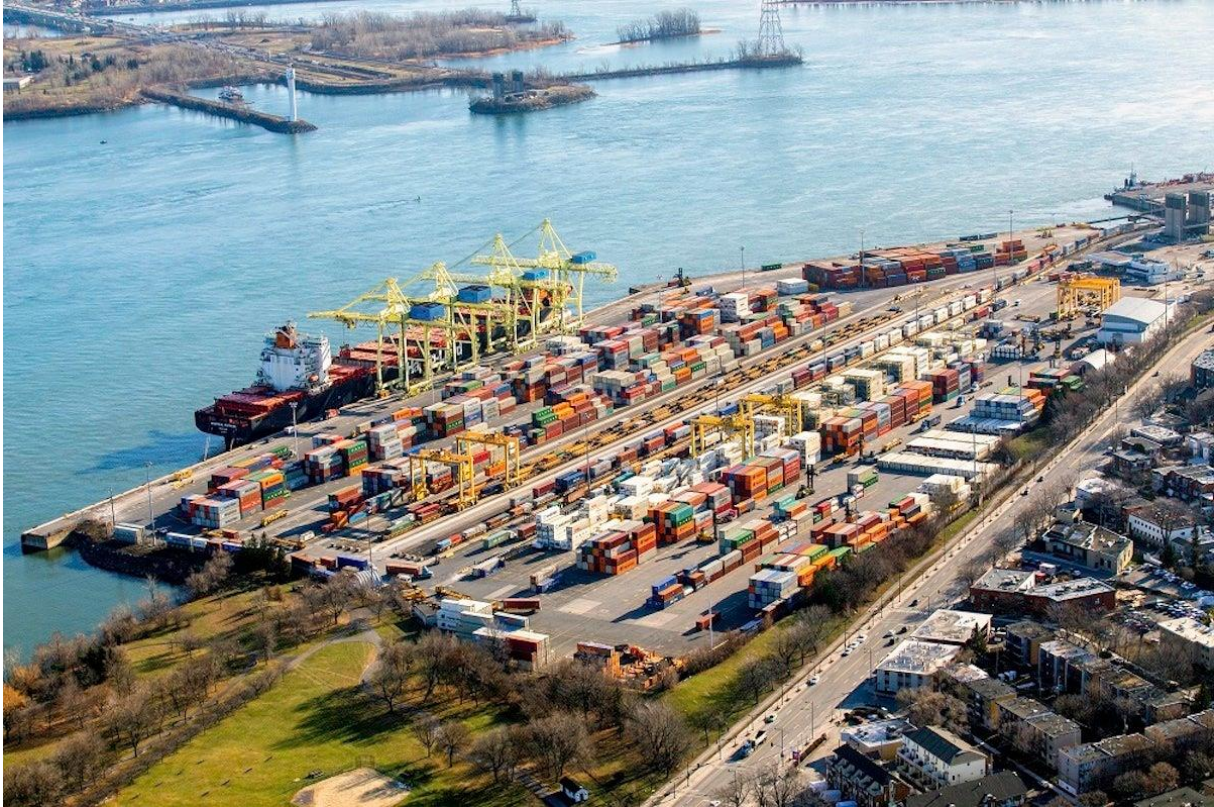


Lockout looms in Montreal port labor dispute

Employers make 'final, comprehensive' offer

[Stuart Chirls](#)

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Cast terminal, Port of Montreal. (Photo: Port of Montreal)

Employers at the Port of Montreal said they would lock out striking workers if their union rejected the latest contract offer.

The Maritime Employers Association (MEA) late Thursday submitted what it called a “final, comprehensive” offer to Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 375, calling for an overall 20% pay raise over six years. Absent a new agreement, the MEA said it would lock out union workers as of 9 p.m. Sunday.

The union since Oct. 31 [has halted container handling](#) at two facilities run by Termont Terminals, which account for 40% of Montreal’s annual box capacity. The strike is an escalation of months of intermittent job actions that employers say have hurt business at Canada’s second-busiest import gateway.

“The MEA asks the union for a reply by 8 p.m. this Sunday on this offer, which provides for a cumulative increase of more than 20% over six years,” the employers said in a statement posted to their website. “The MEA has also informed the union that, in the absence of an agreement on the offer submitted, and as a result of its actions, only essential services and activities unrelated to longshoring will continue at the Port of Montréal from 9 p.m. on Sunday, November 10.”

The union did not immediately respond to emails seeking comment.

In [a separate contract fight](#), employers in British Columbia have locked out union dockworkers at the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert on Canada's west coast.

Labor Minister Steven MacKinnon in a post on X said that he is closely monitoring negotiations. "Both sets of talks are progressing at an insufficient pace, indicating a concerning absence of urgency from the parties involved," MacKinnon wrote.

With Montreal container traffic disrupted, Canada's major railroads have suspended service to the port.

As of Tuesday, a CPKC spokesman said the carrier advised customers that it will restrict all export loads and pre-billed empties destined to the ports in Montreal for Cast and Racine, facilities operated by Montreal Gateway Terminals. The terminals have combined handling capacity of 1.3 million twenty-foot equivalent units, and host carriers CMA CGM, CSAL, Hanjin, Hapag-Lloyd, Maersk, MSC, OOCL, Hamburg Sud and Cosco.

Also Tuesday, CN said rail operations at Cast and Racine were suspended until further notice, according to a spokesperson.

"This action is due to operational constraints and uncertainty arising from the ongoing renewal of the Montreal longshoremen collective agreement," the company said in a customer advisory. "As a result, CN will suspend and remove all capacity at our inland terminals for exports destined for Cast and Racine until further notice. We are closely monitoring the situation and will provide updates as they become available."

This article was updated Nov. 8 to add comments from Canadian Labor Minister Steven MacKinnon.

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