

Compass Minerals clearly indicated at the end of February that it was not interested in negotiating a collective agreement acceptable to the workers when it handed out lay-off notices to 48 workers at the gate as they entered the premises. According to the union, Compass Minerals tried to mislead laid-off workers into accepting a severance package that annulled their right to be recalled. The company persisted in its arrogance by openly declaring at the beginning of the strike that it would attempt to maintain full production through the use of replacement workers bussed in to the site. Earlier in May, the mine's owners obtained a court injunction to limit picketing, which had been holding up vehicles entering the mining facility. The court order has gone into effect, limiting vehicle delay to a maximum of 12 minutes. Workers are reporting that morale is good on the picket line and that the community is supporting their just struggle.

Compass Minerals' Goderich salt mine is located 1,800 feet below Lake Huron in western Ontario and is the largest underground salt mine in the world. The mine has operated since 1959 and was acquired by Compass Minerals in 1990. The main product is rock salt, which is processed at another plant four kilometres away. The salt is also sold in bulk to manufacturers that make plastics, detergents, disinfectants and other products.

(Photos: Unifor)



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