

# Failure to consult and safety concerns shuts down Enbridge Line 9

By Donna Duric  
Writer

WESTOVER - Protesters remained on site throughout the day yesterday despite an injunction ordering them to stop the blockade of Enbridge's Westover pumping station Tuesday morning.

A group of citizens calling itself Hamilton Line 9, along with Six Nations land defenders, shut down the operation of Enbridge's Westover operating centre early Thursday morning in opposition to the company's wish to pump tar sands oil through an Ontario pipeline.

Protesters were delivered an injunction to vacate the property around 8:30 am Tuesday morning and were given two hours to leave before police were to enforce the injunction.

Only one Hamilton police officer was on the scene Tuesday morning. In response to the injunction, a number of non-native protesters chained themselves to the gate at the entrance of the pumping station.

"It's disgraceful that Enbridge is trying to resolve this situation with an injunction when the conflict is rooted in their refusal to meaningfully consult and seek consent from impacted communities," said Trish Mills, who is participating in the lockdown, in a media release issued yesterday morning. "First Enbridge tried getting the Line 9 re-

versal done by stealth, then by trickery, and now, finally, they will do it by force."

"The injunction means our strategies for how to stop this project need to adapt," said Petrone. "Some of us will leave the site to continue demonstrating across the street, while others have decided it's necessary to lock themselves down to remain on the site as long as possible."

The protest is being billed by Hamilton Line 9 as an action in conjunction with Idle No More's "Sovereignty Summer", a catchphrase for actions indigenous people are taking across the country this summer similar to Idle No More's protests across the country this past winter.

## Supporters protest in major cities

Protestors blocked a major traffic artery in downtown Toronto in solidarity with a protest camp stopping construction at an Enbridge Pipeline facility at Westover.

The protest was one of a dozen solidarity protests that took place in cities and First Nations communities across Canada. Another was in Gage Park in Hamilton and in London. Enbridge plans to reverse the flow of an existing underground pipeline, known as Line 9. About 40 protesters in Toronto marched onto University Avenue Tuesday causing traffic grid lock. A black banner was strewn across the road to symbolize an oil spill. Police arrived and the event ended no arrests were made.

Protesters had set up camp in the early morning hours last Thursday at the Westover pumping station, just north of Hamilton, saying they would not leave until Enbridge agrees to halt its Line 9 reversal plans.

"We're going to (stay) until they stop this pipeline,"

said Elysia Petrone last week, spokesperson for the protesters. "We're diametrically opposed to tar sand oil coming through Ontario." Line 9 is a 40-year-old pipeline that runs from Montreal to Sarnia. Enbridge says it wants to reverse the flow eastward to carry western Canadian tar sands oil to Quebec refineries.

A number of protesters had moved off the property while a handful remained chained to a fence in front of the pumping station.

Protesters had cleared workers off the site last week, while a limited number of workers were allowed to pop in occasionally to perform safety checks.

Hamilton Police have been on scene monitoring the

blockade since last week and said their role there was to maintain the police. As of press time, there was no word on when and if they'll physically evict the protesters off the site.

Six Nations land defenders have been on site off and on throughout the week, in-

cluding Floyd and Ruby Montour, John Garlow and Wes Elliott.

Garlow said his main concern is the lack of consultation with Six Nations.

"For me, it's the land issue," he said. "This is Six Nations land. They didn't bother to consult us. They just slapped us in the face again."

Representatives from Enbridge's aboriginal relations department made a presentation on the project to band council's Committee of the Whole in January. No public open houses have been held for Six Nations people to ask questions or voice concerns over the project. Councillor Carl Hill had told Enbridge the meeting was not to be consid-

ered consultation. Council then directed Enbridge to consult with its consultation and accommodation process (CAP) team, made up of members of the Lands and Resources and Economic Development departments.

Councillor Helen Miller said



A Six Nations land defender stands on the lumber and debris activists piled outside the Enbridge construction site to hide the identities of fellow protesters chained to the fence Tuesday. (Photo by Donna Duric)

Enbridge has not consulted with them since January's meeting.

Enbridge has not met with the Confederacy's Haudenosaunee Development Institute either.

Tom Keefer, a non-native activist, said the Hamilton Line 9 group is holding a meeting on Six Nations Friday to share their research on the pipeline and potential environmental impacts.

Petrone, a member of the citizens' group Hamilton 360, said she believes Enbridge has the duty to consult indigenous groups along the route.

"This project has not received free, prior and informed consent from the indigenous people who live along the line," she said. "Onkwehonwe people have not had the opportunity to

get that."

Hamilton 360 protested in front of Hamilton Police headquarters a few weeks ago after learning the force received a donation of All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and almost \$35,000 in cash from Enbridge.

She said the donation is a conflict of interest. "Enbridge has influence-peddled the police," she said.

Petrone voiced concerns about the potential of a spill.

"We're all at risk. If this thing spills, it's going to be devastating." Enbridge's Line 10, which runs from Westover to Buffalo, N.Y., spilled almost 95 cubic metres of crude oil in a soybean field in Binbrook in 2001 after a pipe corroded. The Westover station is located at 1430 Concession 6. It lies next to a farmer's field.