

One-day walkoff is called at Sutter

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Protesting lagging contract talks, Sutter Solano Medical Center's United Healthcare Workers members will walk off the job for one day next week, and some nurses will join them, officials for both unions said Monday.

About 200 of the Sutter Solano workers, who are caregivers other than doctors and nurses, will join union members at nine other Northern California hospitals owned by Sutter Health and Daughters of Charity, according to a statement by Service Employees International Union and United Healthcare Workers-West.

Members of SEIU-UHW, will strike Oct. 29 at five Sutter Health facilities and five hospitals owned by Daughters of Charity Health System and Alliance Clinic, union officials said. The strike is in response to **"months of unfair labor practices and bad-faith negotiation by hospital management,"** they said.

SEIU-UHW spokeswoman Sadie Crabtree said Sutter Solano's California Nurses Association members are among those at three of the striking facilities planning to walk out in solidarity. A Sutter Solano spokeswoman confirmed this is the case.

"We have an official strike notice from SEIU and a sympathy strike notice from (California Nurses Association) that we got over the weekend," said Sutter Solano Chief Nurse Executive Kim Trumbull. "We are well into our strike planning, but we're still talking to our nursing staff."

Sutter Solano's RNs recently ratified a new contract after three short walkouts of their own. Sutter doubts many nurses "will be interested in striking in sympathy" with SEIU-UHW members, Trumbull said.

No one from CNA on Monday was able to determine how many nurses were planning to walk off their jobs.

Workers will strike for 24 hours, beginning at 6 a.m. Oct. 29.

Because there are local registries available to replace striking workers, the stoppage will likely last just the one planned day, Trumbull said. This is unlike when earlier nurses strikes required a minimum number of days for replacement nurses.

More than 3,300 caregivers at Sutter hospitals have been bargaining since May and working without a contract since Sept. 30, according to the unions, with staffing levels a main sticking point.