

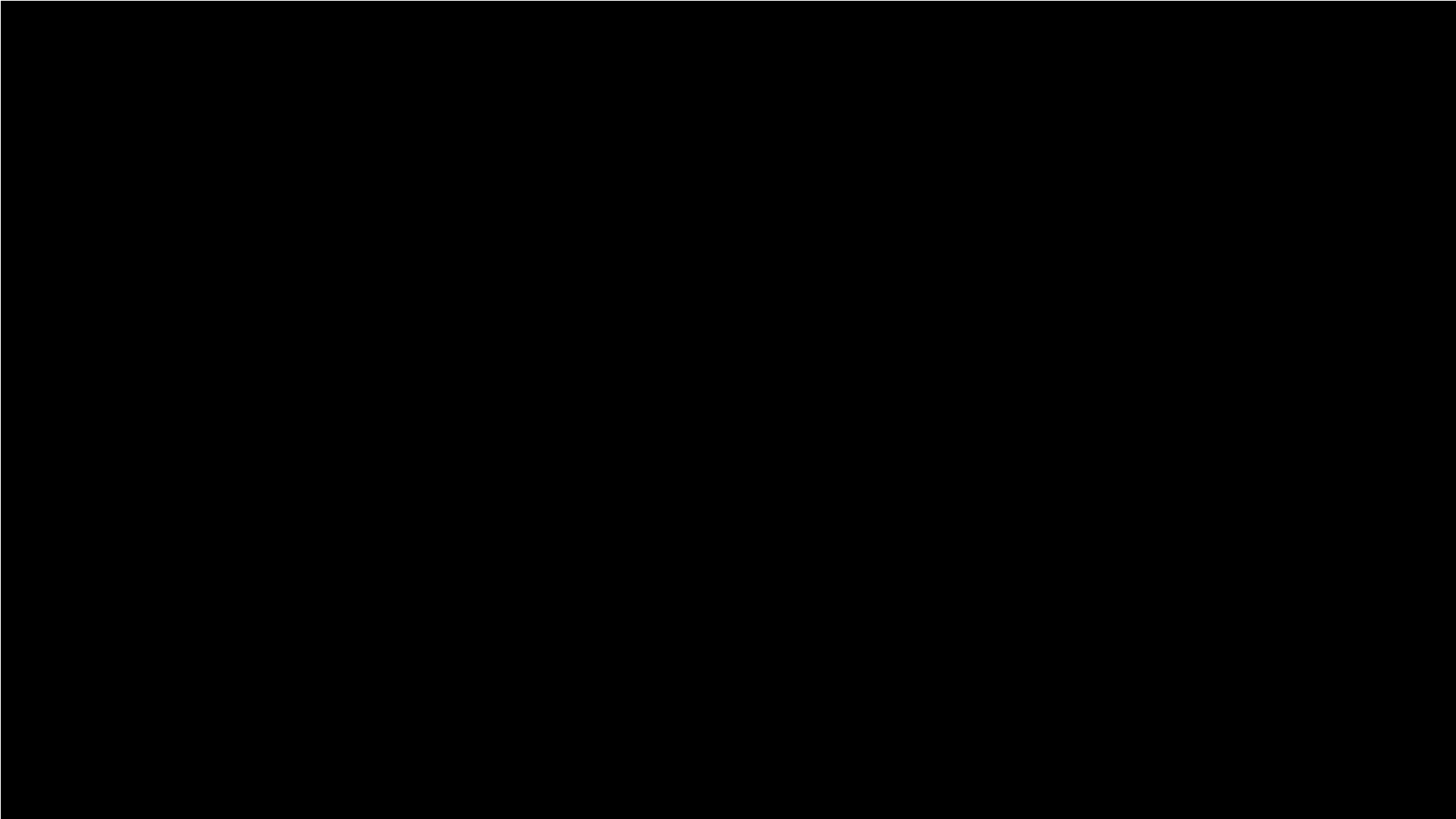


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Overturned bus blocks roadway after escalation in Caledonia, Ont. land dispute

By [Natalie van Rooy](#)

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From CTV Kitchener’s Natalie van Rooy: Tensions are high at a disputed housing site in Caledonia following Thursday’s injunction.

KITCHENER — A roadway remained blocked in Caledonia on Friday afternoon after tensions flared overnight.

Demonstrators clashed with police in a standoff after a judge granted a permanent injunction Thursday ordering the group, largely comprised of members from Six Nations of the Grand River, off of a proposed housing development, McKenzie Meadows.

Things were more calm by the next day after the tense evening between demonstrators and the Ontario Provincial Police.

Demonstrators said that, at one point, officers fired rubber bullets in their direction, something police partially confirmed.

"While OPP cruisers were parked on Argyle St. South, rocks were thrown at several cruisers causing significant damage. When rocks and wood were thrown at the officers, for their safety, officers used appropriate non-lethal force equipment in response," said Provincial Const. Rod LeClair in an email.

"A round from an ARWEN device (rubber bullet) was deployed, as well as a deployment from a Conducted Energy Weapon (TASER). There were no serious injuries to demonstrators or police."

A bus was also overturned in the middle of Argyle Street South overnight, blocking the site of the proposed development.

Tires and wood pallets were burned overnight, too. People who live in the area told CTV that they lost power in the evening after a hydro pole was set on fire.

"When they show up and say they're going to be dragging people away from their lands, that's inherently violent," protester Skyler Williams said.

Williams said he he won't back down despite the court injunction.

"We are at 10 days," he said. "If it takes 100 days more, 100 weeks more, we will be here."

During a Friday afternoon press conference, Premier Doug Ford blasted the violence, calling those involved in the confrontation "bad apples."

"The way you get things settled is by sitting around the table, talking about solutions. You don't go after our police, you don't start burning telephone poles, you don't start digging up roads," he said.

"That's unacceptable and we won't tolerate it, it's very, very simple."

The situation has been developing for months. The demonstrators there have been blocking off the site, which they have renamed 1492 Land Back Lane, since mid-July.

The demonstrations escalated on Thursday after a court ruled that they would have to permanently leave the construction site on disputed land.

Hours after the ruling, the OPP said police cruisers near the McKenzie Meadows site were heavily damaged, and that officers used non-lethal force in return to protect officers.

In a news release, Six Nations Elected Council said it's calling for "calm, peaceful and respectful relations on all sides."

"We acknowledge the tensions in our community and are committed to taking actions to repair relations here at Six Nations," a statement from council said in part. "We recognize that the accommodation agreement at McKenzie Meadows is one of the concerns. We want you to know that we did it because we thought it was a benefit to our community. We have heard from many community members that they feel it was not the best decision for the Territory, and we are listening."

Councillors also said they're bound to the agreement, but have learned from it.

"We do not condone the violence or destruction of property and we are calling for calm to refocus our minds," the statement said.

"We hope in the days ahead, that we can work in unity to focus on the common goal of addressing our Six Nations Land Claims. It's time for the federal and provincial governments to right their wrongs."

Council members said they motioned to remove the injunctions imposed on the protesters.

Haldimand County Mayor Ken Hewitt said he's reached out to Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett to ask for help with the escalating situation.

Williams said no meeting has been scheduled, but added there's a lot to negotiate with the federal government regarding the land claim.

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