

# Komoka EMS Station to Increase Response Time

By John M. Milner

December 1, 2006

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24th** saw the grand opening for the #11 Station for Middlesex-London EMS, now known as Komoka Station, located at 22494 Komoka Road. The ceremony included an open house with county and city politicians, local school officials and Komoka citizens in attendance. There was an official ribbon cutting ceremony at noon, with Station Manager Tom Pickering, Thames EMS President Randy Denning, Middlesex County Warden Joanne Vanderheyden and Mayor of Middlesex Centre Al Edmonson doing the honors.

The Station serves the communities of Komoka, Kilworth, Delaware, Poplar Hill, Mt. Brydges and all points in between. Pickering estimates that the station will serve approximately 17,000 people.

"This area has been underserved for years," Pickering says, noting that previously the closest ambulance stations to the Komoka-Kilworth area was Strathroy or at Oxford-Wonderland in the City of London. "This (station) has filled a large gap in our response area," he says.

Pickering says that the establishment of the Komoka Station will cut down the response times to the areas they serve. "We're averaging anywhere from ten to twelve minutes overall to get to our calls," Pickering says, "where it used to be anywhere between seventeen and twenty-two."

The Komoka Station is the first brand-new station to be built since Thames Emergency Medical Services took over the operations of ambulance services in all of Middlesex County (including London) in 2000. "We are the template, basically, for new stations that



Station Manager Tom Pickering, Thames EMS President Randy Denning, Warden Joanne Vanderheyden and Mayor Al Edmonston participated in the official ribbon cutting ceremony at the Opening of the Komoka EMS Station.



are...to be built in the both and the county in the near future," Pickering says.

While Thames EMS has had staff in the area since May 2004, construction began on Komoka Station in June 2006, with the staff formally moving into the station on October 29th.

Komoka Station is an advanced paramedic station, staffed with an advanced care paramedic and a primary care paramedic twenty-four hours

a day. There is a crew on duty at all times, working in rotating twelve hours shifts, either from 7 am - 7 pm or from 7pm - 7 am. The Station is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The response from the community has been positive, Pickering says. "We've been accepted greatly." The station's neighbours have commented on how residential the station looks and how well it blends with the community.

"They've been very impressed with how we've been dealing with our community responsibilities, how we're very receptive to public relations," Pickering explains. The staff at the station has already received numerous invitations to come visit schools and other community groups. Pickering says that they have already visited Parkview School during Community Helper's Week. ◆