

## Positive program

It's unlikely that most Halton Hills residents will ever be affected by a recent program adopted by the Halton Hills Fire Department (HHFD).

However, for some residents who may one day find themselves in an emergency situation, it could very well mean the difference between life and death.

The HHFD has enhanced its service with a new Emergency Patient Care Program.

Through this enhanced tiered response program HHFD will now respond to cardiac arrests, respiratory arrests and motor vehicle accidents when there are injuries. Calls will go to 911, which then dispatches the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) unit, and then contacts HHFD. Whoever is first on the scene initiates the patient care, and both emergency services personnel work together as required.

Previously EMS would arrive on a scene of a motor vehicle accident and determine whether HHFD should be called to extricate trapped people.

Under the new program the HHFD will also be first responders.

"While we did play a minor role in tiered response in previous years, now that our full-time staffing has increased to the level where there are people available for the majority of the day, we are able to respond to calls in a more urgent fashion than we were able to before," said Halton Hills Fire Chief Brent Marshall. "Particularly to medical assist calls."

Previously, HHFD responded only to those calls if EMS would be significantly delayed.

So far this year, HHFD has responded to more than 50 shared response calls, and 25-30 per cent of those calls, HHFD was first on the scene.

Marshall believes HHFD has been responsible for saving three or four lives as a result of the program.

We should be proud of the work all our emergency response teams do each day and also be grateful they are constantly looking at ways of improving their service.

### WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to [www.theifp.ca](http://www.theifp.ca))

The annual OPP Ontario Seatbelt Campaign will be held Sept. 24-Oct. 6.

Do you buckle up?

- Always (97%)
- Sometimes (3%)
- Never (0%)

### The Independent & Free Press

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Steve Nease

**905-873-0301**  
**Publisher:** Ken Nugent  
**General manager:** Steve Foreman (sforeman@theifp.ca)  
**Retail advertising manager:** Cindi Campbell (ccampbell@theifp.ca)  
**Managing editor:** John McGhie (jmcghie@theifp.ca)  
**Distribution manager:** Nancy Geissler (ngeissler@theifp.ca)  
**Classifieds**  
 Kristie Pells (classified@theifp.ca)  
**Accounting**  
 Rose Marie Gauthier  
**Editorial**  
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor (cgamble@theifp.ca)  
 Ted Brown: Photography (tbrown@theifp.ca)  
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer (ltallyn@theifp.ca)  
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports (emaher@theifp.ca)

### Letters policy

**Letters must include an address and daytime phone number.**

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**Email:**

[jmcghie@theifp.ca](mailto:jmcghie@theifp.ca)

**Mail or drop off:**

**Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B1.**

## Letters to the editor

### Gas, cell phones don't mix— driver

Dear editor,

The other day I was filling my tank at the local self-serve station when I noticed a person drive up to the pumps, get out of their vehicle and talk on their cell phone.

While still talking on the phone they started to go through the process of setting up the pump.

I had just finished my fill and was putting my cap back on the car. I smiled and asked the person if it would be possible to stop their call before putting the nozzle in the tank. Yes, I got "the stare".

I mentioned to the person about some possible dangers, they looked a little confused and proceeded to pump with the cell back to their ear. I drove away just a little quicker than usual.

There are warning signs above the pumps explaining the dangers of "static electricity". These warnings should be more visible to the public with diagrams. The odds of something happening are difficult to predict as there are so many variables, but it can surely happen.

Why take the chance with your

life and the lives of others?

Please Google "Can cell phones cause explosions at gas pumps" on YouTube. You will see a few surveillance videos and other examples what can happen when cell phones and static electricity are around gas fumes and when the combination becomes volatile. Once you view a couple, hopefully the point will be made.

Be safe and stay well.

*Douglas Wellington, Georgetown*

### New ideas needed

Dear editor,

Apparently Councillor Jane Fogal, Mayor Rick Bonnette and our council of apathy's lack of imagination never changes.

They are "happy" with another-tax hike! I am asking everyone, are you? And, if not, please start telling them!

Why can't they find savings and do some internal belt-tightening first? Why not negotiate affordable salaries? Why are we hiring someone to promote "tourism" and adding even more people on the public trough?

What exactly is there to promote? I guess the ever-growing new empty factory space, and seemingly

ever-lasting past empty factory space would be my first clue or possibly the rotting eyesore and ever-increasing safety hazard near Maple Avenue and River Road.

We need "industrial growth" not more personal taxes and certainly no more government staff. While they love to boast about the new super mall near the 401 helping us, to the rest of the "outside world" that is considered Milton and its continued success. Long-term it will only kill small business locally unless they can convince me or the other growing amount of concerned local businesspeople.

We continue to have a great community that needs fresh approaches and ideas so we can still afford to live here in the near future.

*Paul Madonia, Georgetown*

### Samaritan thanked

Dear editor,

I would like to thank the person who found my transmitter to my dog's collar last weekend and hung it on the tennis court fence.

It's nice to know there are Good Samaritans still out there. Thank you so much.

*P. Friend, Georgetown*