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## Glitches in Reverse 911 cause for concern

BY SARAH FISHER

Essex County councillors are growing impatient with glitches in the county's Reverse 911 system.

Reverse 911 permits emergency service personnel and coordinators to notify residents in events such as boil water advisories, chemical spills, floods and fires. The system involves a database of phone numbers as well as digital mapping.

During a county council meeting in August councillors complained that the system has experienced continuous problems. Residents who should have been told

about the fire at QM Plastics in Lakeshore July 24 didn't receive calls; other residents outside the identified call area were notified causing unnecessary worry.

On Sept. 6 councillors met for a meeting of the 911 Technical Advisory Committee. Emergency Management Coordinator Phil Berthiaume reported tests are being conducted on the system to identify problem areas, and information was being entered into the system to help correct the problem with the current database.

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## County to consider unified public ambulance service

BY SARAH FISHER

Essex County council voted during a special meeting Sept. 7 to gather more information before making a decision about changing to a unified system of ambulance service for residents.

Essex Windsor EMS, a public service, Sun Parlor Emergency Services and Harrow Ambulance Services, two privately owned companies, and a volunteer service in

Amherstburg, currently provide ambulance service to residents in Essex County. The county acquired the responsibility of ambulance service from the province in 2001 and asked KPMG to evaluate the situation in 2005.

Council considered tabling the discussion. The City of Windsor sent notice requesting a delay.

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Jack Seitz, territory sales manager for Autofarm GPS Precision Farming, goes through a demonstration of the GPS AutoSteer during the Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association's Farm Twilight Tour in Leamington Saturday. The technology was recently installed on Paul Tiessen's farm, and allows for hands-free tractor steering, accuracy and fuel-savings when tending crops.

## Leamington farmer demonstrates new GPS technology

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

LEAMINGTON – For Paul Tiessen, farming in the 21st century means automatically steered tractors guided by global positioning system satellites.

The Leamington resident and 2005 Conservation Farm Award winner got a chance to showcase the new technology during the Essex Soil and Crop Improvement Association's Farm Twilight Tour on his property Sept. 9.

Tiessen plans to use the Global Positioning System AutoSteer on his 1,200-acre farm next season to plant

tomato beds, corn, beans and wheat. He decided to apply the technology to his farm because of the operator fatigue experienced by his hired workers.

"If it makes things easier for them, they'll hopefully be more productive," he said.

Tiessen installed the system over the summer. It consists of a base station at the top of a tower on his property and a radio receiver planted on the roof of his Case MX200 tractor.

As long as the tractor is within a six-mile radius of the tower, Tiessen can

program the GPS to farm his land with accuracy and fuel savings.

Representatives of HJV Precision, an equipment dealer for Autofarm GPS Precision Farming products, which manufactures the software, were on hand to provide demonstrations of the technology for those attending the tour.

"In agriculture, the technology lends itself well because we're working in open spaces under the sky," said HJV Precision ag specialist John Murray.

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