

June 8, 2021

For Immediate Release

Elgin County Designated as Regional Fire Training Centre

Elgin County, Ontario – The County of Elgin is excited to announce that it has received provincial designation as a regional training centre for firefighters.

In early 2021, the Province of Ontario announced that it would close the Ontario Fire College in Gravenhurst. This single training hub would be replaced by a decentralized system designed to enhance local training opportunities through the designation of 20 regional training centres.

Elgin County Fire Training Officer/CEMC Jeff VanRybroeck announced at a County Council meeting on June 8, 2021, that the County's application to operate one of these training centres had been accepted.

"Elgin County's location in southwestern Ontario and its existing facilities made us an ideal candidate to host a fire training centre," said Warden Tom Marks. "We are excited to expand on the joint training programs already in place across the County and to offer additional training opportunities close to home."

The training centre will provide firefighters from Elgin County's seven (7) Local Municipal Partners as well as Middlesex County the opportunity to receive new recruit training as well as higher level training courses for career advancement such as certification for instructors and fire officers. Training will be hosted at existing facilities across Elgin County and will not add additional costs to the existing fire training program.

"Elgin County is honoured to have been chosen as a location for a regional training centre," said Warden Tom Marks. "Being able to offer this level of training in Elgin County is going to reduce the burden on local firefighters, the majority of who are volunteers. Taking time off work to attend a training session in a community far away from their homes was inconvenient for part-time firefighters and costly for municipalities who often had to pay for travel and overnight stays. A local option will be both more convenient and less costly – it's a win-win situation."

The training centre will also be open to firefighters from areas outside of Elgin County and Middlesex County who want to access training in a more convenient location.

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