

Preparation makes painting easier

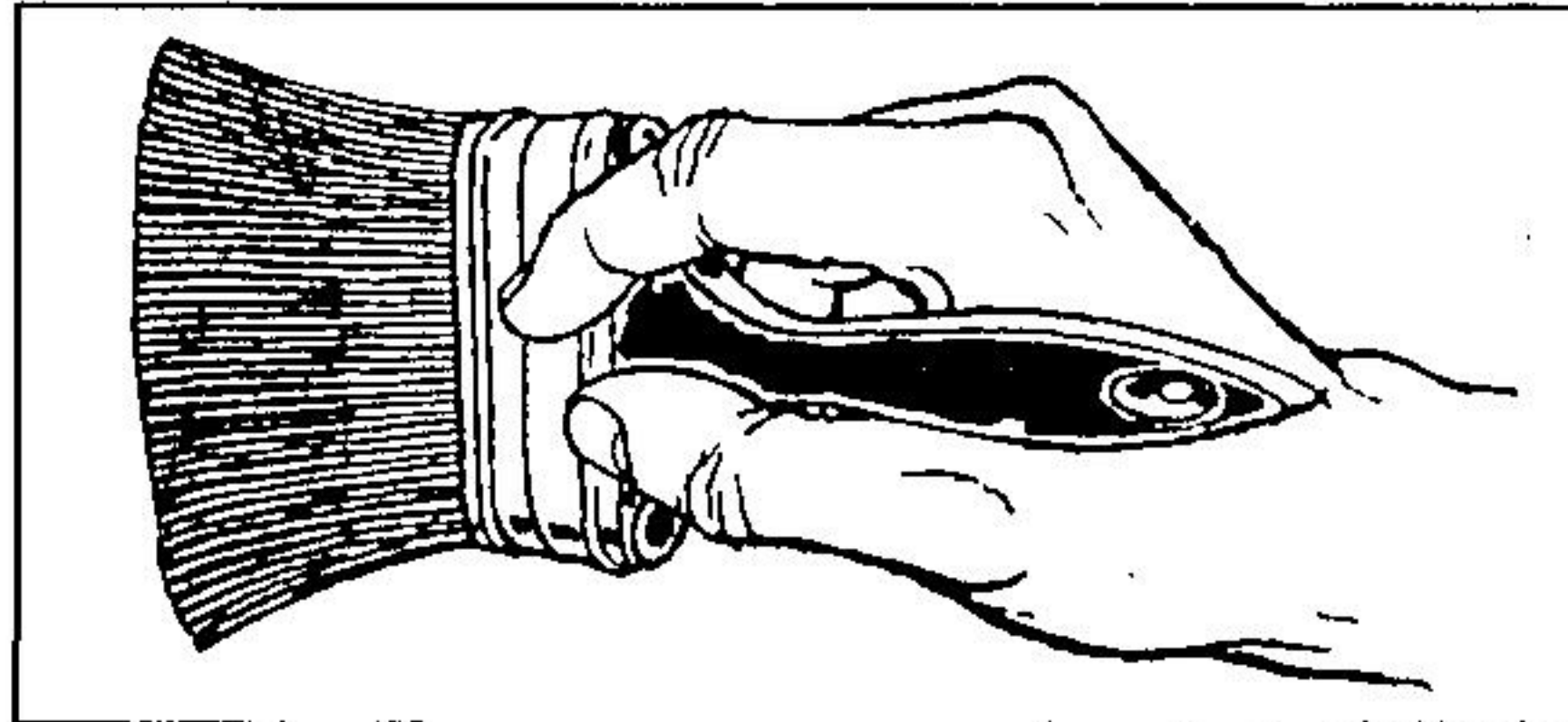
Strangely enough, there are people in this world who do like to paint. While the majority of us like the end result and glory in the new life of a freshly painted room, the actual process of painting can be tiring, messy and frustrating. In this column we will offer a few hints that will make painting easier, quicker and far less frustrating.

Latex paint is by far the easiest to

use. It goes on with little effort, is relatively odor-free and, best of all, the brushes, rollers and you yourself can be cleaned up with soap and water. While these paints will not last as long as the oil-based paints in difficult areas (kitchen, bathroom), their ease of application makes them one of the most popular wall coatings. Oil-based paints are used in areas where they will be

exposed to hard use (many washings, moisture or grease). They are also the most popular for outdoor use, where they will be exposed to the elements. Although modern science has come a long way in removing some of the strong odor associated with oil-based paints, they still are considerably stronger than latex paints and very objectionable to some people. Alkyd paint, a relatively modern development, is low in odor but requires a solvent for cleanup. It also works well in heavy-use areas.

Have adequate drop sheets on hand. Old sheets are excellent are are old shower curtains. Remove all portable furniture from the room and move the heavy furniture to one end of the room, cover with polyethylene and move to the other end when painting is completed in that area. Use proper ladders and sturdy chairs to stand on. Allow yourself adequate time to do the job. People who are in a hurry are the ones that end up getting hurt.



First aid for damp basements

Are you bothered with leaks or seepage through your basement wall or floors? If so, both problems can be solved. However, they are not the easiest jobs in the world and sometimes finding the solution can be a long and frustrating process.

The obvious problem

The first thing to do is to look outside the leaking wall and see if there is an obvious reason for the leak. Does a sidewalk or driveway slope down toward the house wall? Is there a downspout in the immediate area that is channeling water toward the leaking spot? Is there a slope to the back yard that invites water to rest against the house?

These are all situations that can cause water to find its way into your basement. Incidentally, water has a strange way of finding an opening sometimes yards away from what would seem to be the other problem spot. In other words, if the walk slopes in toward your house 3 yards up from your basement do not discount that as the cause of the problem.

The first step is to closely inspect the exterior of the house and correct all of the above-mentioned situations when they appear.

Another think to look for is exterior waterproofing on the basement walls. This black, tar-like coating should extend up the wall well above ground level. If this is not the case, water can seep into the concrete or block and seep down to enter the house at a lower level. This material is not expensive and is easy to apply but the tough part is to dig away the soil from the house wall in order to apply a new coating.

If all the exterior problems seem to be fixed you can look inside. This may be the most difficult problem to fix. You may want to re-cover the basement walls. There are many cement-like wall coatings on the market. These products will prevent minor seepage but will be of no value if there are cracks or holes in your basement walls.

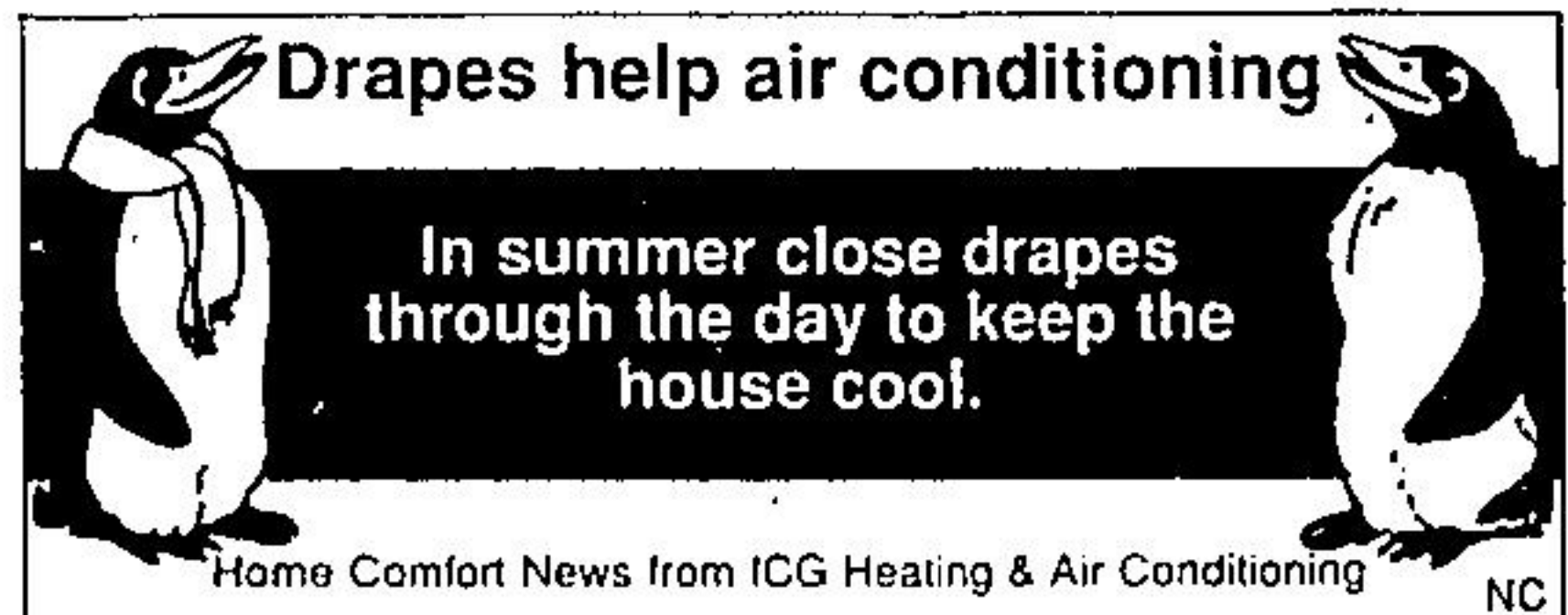
Often these cracks do not appear until several years after the house is built and are usually due to settling of the surface rather than poor workmanship. If you have a large crack in the wall the first thing to do is to enlarge it. That's right enlarge it!

Undercut the edges of the crack so that the patching compound you use will have something to cling to. There are many epoxy and latex cement products on the market that are excellent for this job. Your local hardware dealer will be able to advise you on which product will best fill the bill for your problem.

Once all the holes and cracks have been filled in this manner you may want to apply one of the "waterproofing" paints that are now available in a wide range of colors. Many are available in dry form and have to be mixed with water before application while others are applied directly from the can.

To be successful a "membrane" of waterproof material must be applied to the inside wall without flaws or faults. Therefore do not try and save materials

by spreading it out thin. If the instructions says this package covers 30 sq. ft. that is exactly what you should cover with this amount of material.



Electrical safety in the home

A contractor, when building a home today is required to install an electrical system that adheres to a rigid code that is usually enforced by municipal inspectors and is installed by licensed electrician. The newest safety requirement is a ground fault plug on exterior, bathroom and laundry room installations where a short circuit could cause electrocution.

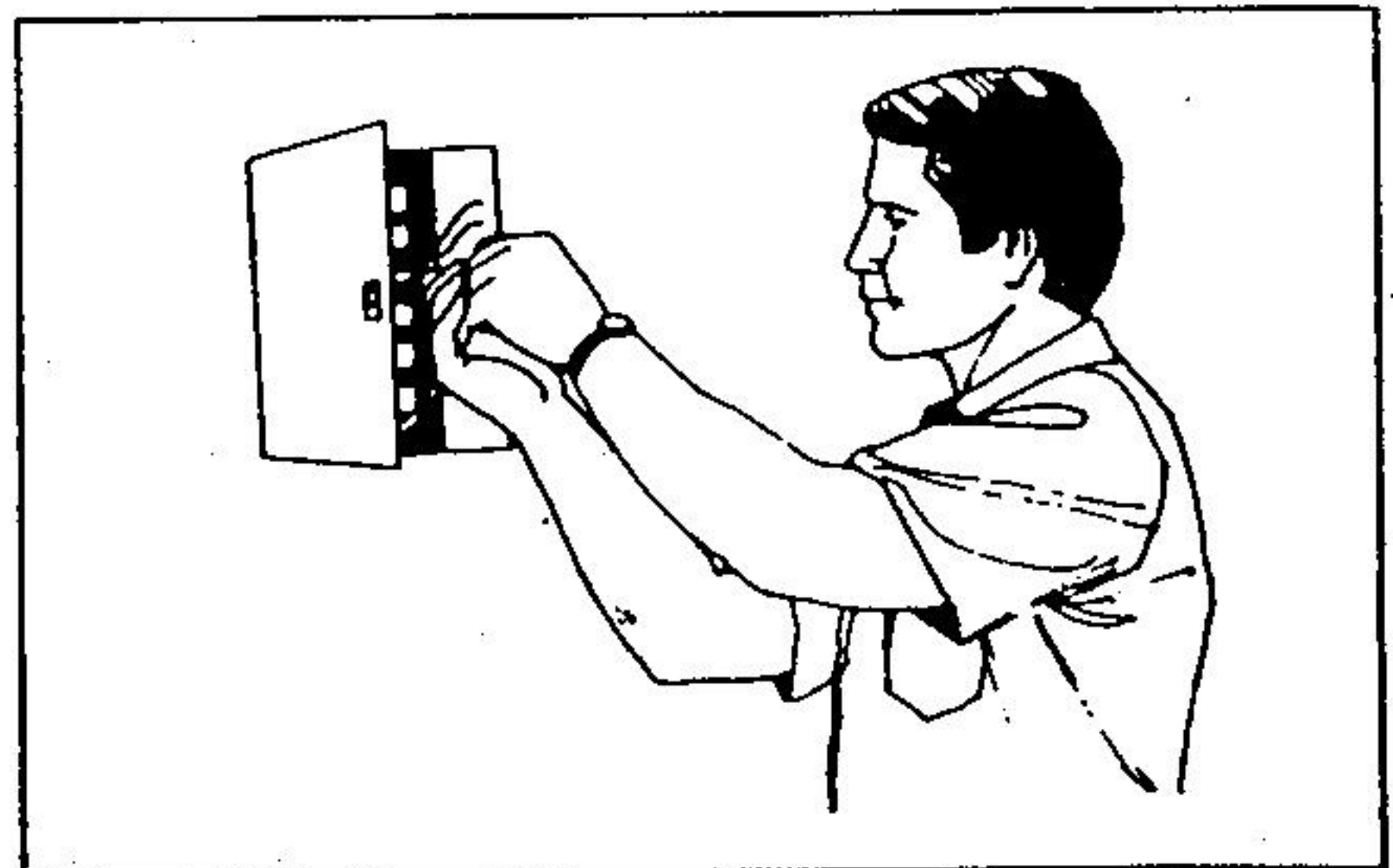
All of these extensive precautions are used in the original construction of a new house but many of the problems arise when an individual does his own renovations or does not follow common sense rules for fusing and using the electrical circuits.

Hardware stores stock a complete line of electrical wire, boxes, tools, and supplies. If you are going to add some plugs or wire a Rec Room be sure to find out what your local codes are and should you be in any doubt contact an electrician.

Fuses...

Never use anything more than a 15 Amp fuse in a regular house circuit. If a fuse keeps blowing either the circuit is overloaded or there is a problem with the appliance, lamp or device that is plugged into that circuit. There could also be a problem with one of the plugs or fixtures in the circuit or even with the wiring itself. NEVER, NEVER replace a 15 Amp. fuse with one of a larger capacity! If the starting load of an appliance or motor blows the fuse often a Time Delay Fuse will correct the situation. These fuses will tolerate the starting load of a motor for a short period of time allowing the motor to reach running speed where it draws less current.

See your local Canadian Retail Hardware Association dealer for your electrical needs and supplies. Remember, an unsafe electrical installation can lead to a shocking problem!



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