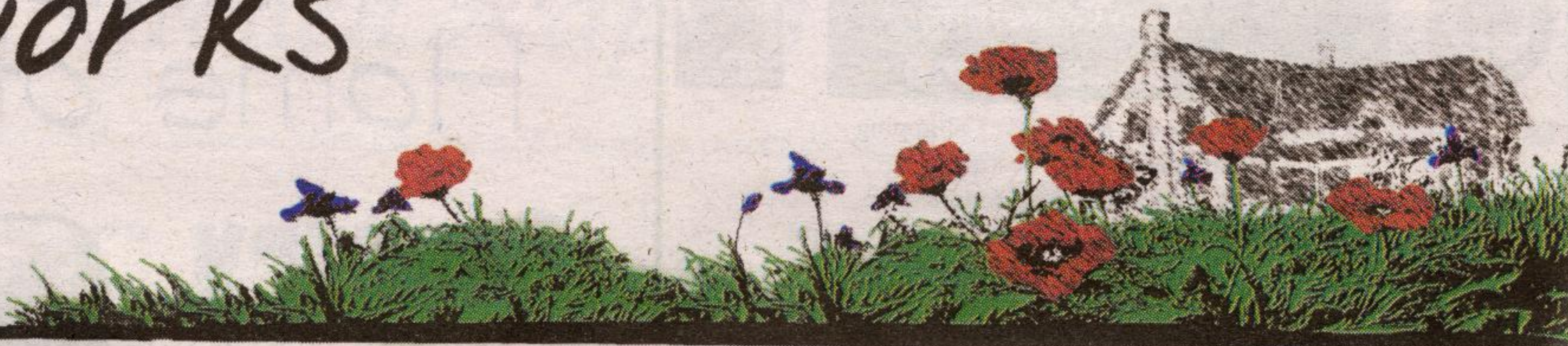


# Homeworks



## Putting dollars back into homeowners' pockets

BY DEBORAH QUAILE

The Federal Government launched a new program on October 21 to combat global climate change that could put over \$1 million into the pockets of Halton homeowners. As part of the federal government's \$1 billion Kyoto Plan announced last August, *EnerGuide for Houses* provides grants to homeowners who improve their home's energy efficiency. The program is available in Halton region through the Halton Residential Energy Efficiency Project (Halton REEP), a project of the not-for-profit Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence.

"Each and every one of us contributes to global climate change through the energy we use to heat and cool our homes. This program provides a powerful financial incentive to reduce this environmental impact. But the really good news is that improving your home's energy efficiency will also

make your home more comfortable and save you money on your monthly utility bill," says Robin Cooper, Manager of Halton REEP.

REEP's trained and certified energy efficiency advisors visit homes to evaluate energy efficiency using the *EnerGuide for Houses* rating system. Each home is given an efficiency rating between 0 and 100, along with prioritized recommendations - such as insulation, draftproofing and new heating systems - to improve that rating. The Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence has been operating REEPs in local communities such as Guelph, Waterloo, and Grey and Bruce counties since 1999, and over 5,000 homeowners have participated.

The new federal grant program announced October 21 provides yet another reason to take action. Homeowners who imple-

ment REEP's recommendations could receive a cash grant from the federal government for each point that they improve on the 0 to 100 point *EnerGuide* scale. An average Canadian home rates 62 on the scale and has the potential to increase to 73. Such an improvement would result in a grant of approximately \$619, with the maximum grant amount that any homeowner can receive being \$3,350.

"Halton REEP plans to visit 1,800 homes over the next three years. If each of those homes achieves the typical results for the program ...that adds up to more than \$1 million in federal grants flowing into this community," adds Ms. Cooper. Perhaps even better than the cash incentive is the fact that more than \$600,000 per year in savings can be achieved for Halton residents on their home heating costs - money that would normally leave the community.

In order to qualify for the grant program homeowners must first have a visit from a Halton REEP energy efficiency advisor who will determine your home's point value. After implementing some or all of the recommendations the advisor will return for a free follow-up visit to determine the improvement rating. Cost of the full service is \$175. Call 1-866-501-1112 or visit [www.thereep.ca](http://www.thereep.ca) for more information.

Jason Thorne of the Elora Centre for Environmental Excellence examines the exhaust system of a house to determine its efficiency rating.

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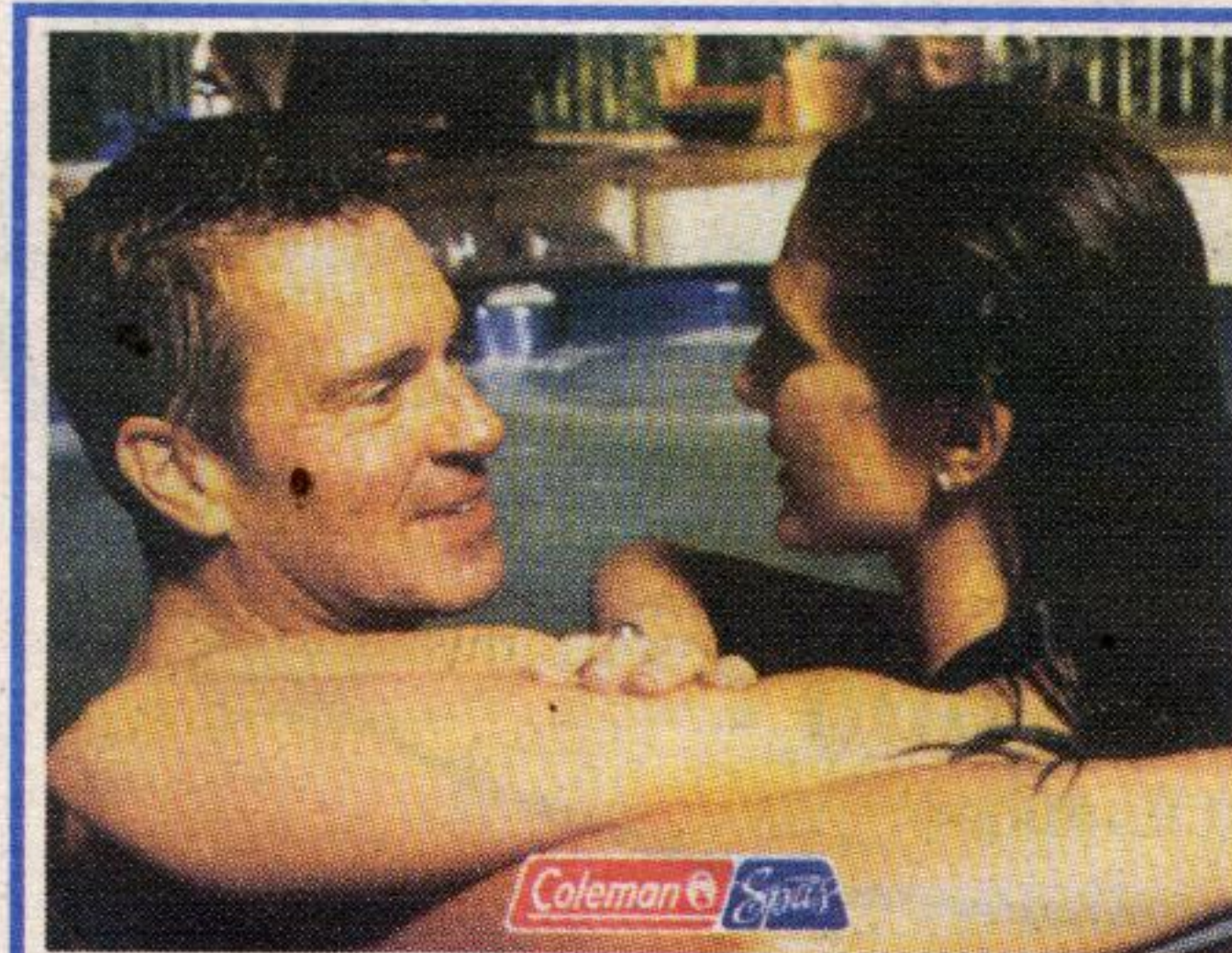
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