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# Icy clutches of winter approaching

## Protecting your home

Now that the very last leaves of autumn have made their way into the composting bin, it's time once again to turn your thoughts to protecting your home from the icy grasp of winter.

After all, you want your home to provide the maximum amount of warmth and comfort at a reasonable cost.

By doing a few relatively simple things in and around your home now, before the real deep freeze sets in, you can avoid unpleasant surprises down the road - and possibly reduce your heating costs at the same time.

Reducing drafts and heat loss by caulking and weatherstripping for instance, can have a major impact on the energy efficiency of your home.

### Test Windows & Doors

To see if your home could use some reinforcement, try testing your doors and windows to see how they stand up.

Take a feather or a piece of tissue paper and hold it around the edges of your doors and windows. If you detect movement in the feather or tissue, chances are you're losing some heat through poor seals or cracks. And this, of course, translates directly into higher heating bills.

If you find that you do have leaks, the situation can usually be easily remedied by applying some caulking or weatherstripping around the edges of your windows and doors. Or, if you find you have a draft blowing in beneath your door, consider installing a doorsweep.

### Consult Experts

To find out which type of remedy is best for your particular situation, try talking to the experts at your local hardware or building supply store. They should be able to recommend a suitable product.

Also try consulting some home maintenance books, or publications put out by the government and government-related agencies.

You can also consider installing

temporary storm windows. Available in its, these are made of plastic which strinks to fit your window frame when you apply the heat of a hair dryer.

If cost isn't a major concern, you may even want to consider installing some new windows or a new door. For windows in particular, you may also want to consider installing some of the new insulating window coverings now available on the market.

### Attic

Also check your attic to see if your insulation needs topping up. Old insulation can become damp from condensation and worn down, thereby losing its effectiveness.

By topping it up or replacing it altogether, you should see a noticeable improvement. You can do this yourself or hire an expert. Either way, make sure you use products that are approved and highly rated for their insulation value. If you're a "do-it-yourselfer", make sure you take the necessary precautions.

### Walls

If you have an older home with very little insulation in the walls, you know the effect that a good strong wind can have on your home - it feels like someone left a window open.

To remedy the situation, you may want to consider having insulation blown in from outside. Be sure you shop around before making your final decision and find out as much about available products as you can.

While checking your house, also make sure you take a good look at your basement. Check for any cracks or holes in the walls and inspect window openings for a loose fit.

By taking these simple precautionary measures, you can help protect your home from the worst winter has to offer - and save a little extra money at the same time.

This article is provided by local Realtors and the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) for the benefit of consumers in the real estate market



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 <p><b>\$184,900 TASTEFULLY DECORATED STONE HOME</b> Quaint stone cottage. Deep sills, old fashioned tub. Pleasant blend of old and new. Private back yard. Close to the river. Please call Michele* or Gord**. RMRW95-036</p>	 <p><b>SPACE FOR THE FAMILY</b> 3 bedrooms up and 2 bedrooms down. Walkout from dining room to deck. Large bright rec room. Close to school, park, shopping &amp; Rockwood Conservation. \$154,900. RMRW95-044</p>	 <p><b>CLASSIC HORSE FARM</b> 45 acres. Top of the line arena with viewing loft &amp; 10 box stalls - sand ring - 6 paddocks. Large 4 bedroom home, 2 bay garage with offices, stocked pond. Excellent facility. Call Michele* or Gord**. RMRW95-055</p>
 <p><b>QUAINT STONE COTTAGE \$129,900</b> One of the few homes in Eden Mills backing onto the Eramosa River. 2 bedrooms, LR, DR, galley kitchen, pine firs, 18' walls. Tranquility and nature. RMRW95-049</p>	 <p><b>BELFOUNTAIN</b> \$139,900 is a low price for this well kept 2 bedroom bungalow, large eat-in kitchen, living room with woodstove, family room and mudroom. Close to the Bruce Trail, Credit River Conservation and Caledon Ski Club and many community amenities.</p>	 <p><b>GREAT COUNTRY \$209,000</b> 2.8 acres, 500' frontage, brick bungalow, 3 plus bedrooms, large rec room with woodstove, fireplace insert in living room, covered patio 26'x17', walkout to 17'x31' inground pool, detached garage &amp; shop 27'x22'. 10 minutes north of Milton. Call Gord*. RMAC95-054</p>

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