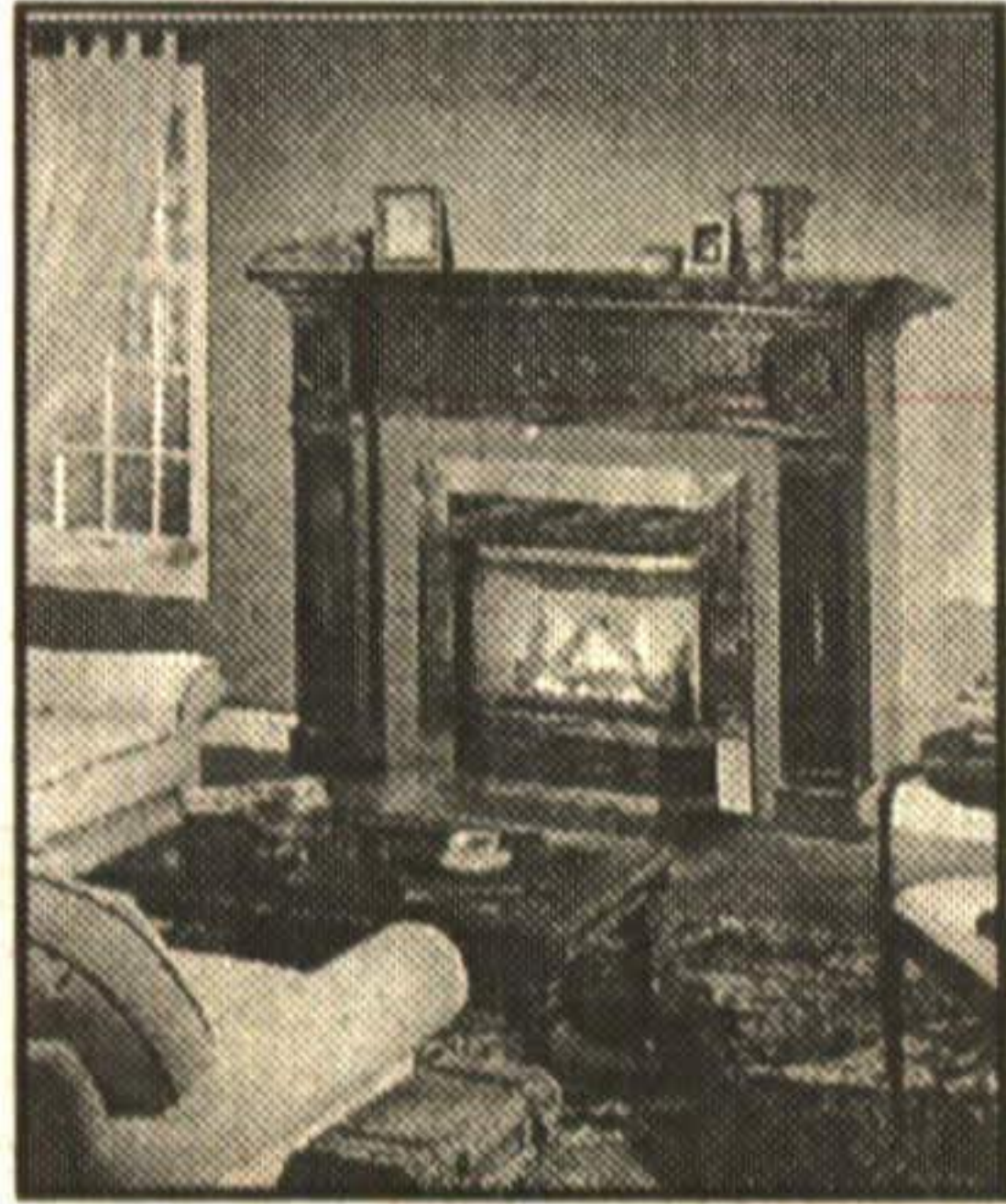


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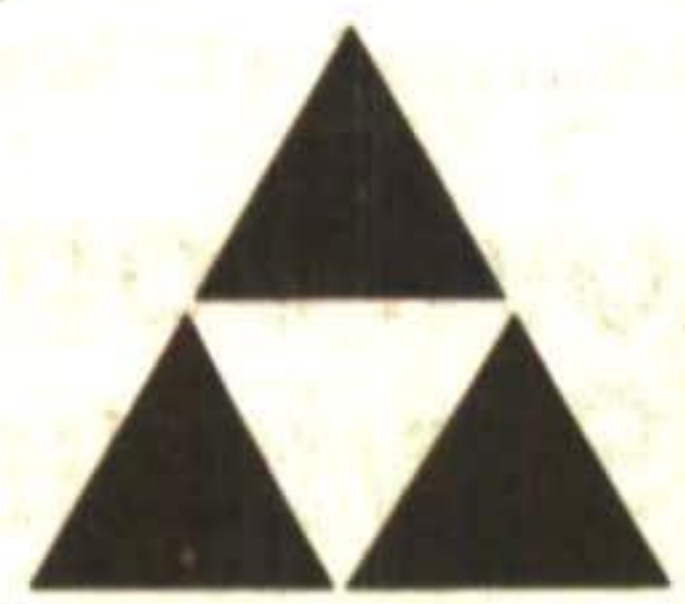
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SBUILT MECHANICAL

If you're feeling a draft it's time to winterproof

If your heating bills are skyrocketing and you can feel cold drafts when you're sitting on the sofa, it only means one thing; winter is here and you need to winter weather proof your home.

"It's amazing how much money and energy you can save by spending a few hours winter weather proofing your home," says Peter Sciuto of The Home Depot, Canada's home improvement warehouse. "Anyone can do these simple energy savers, no matter how much experience you have with tools."

Sciuto offers the following tips to help you cut down on your energy consumption and keep your home a little warmer this winter.

Thermostats

Easy-to-install, energy-efficient programmable thermostats allow you to automatically control temperatures. Programming your thermostat to 16C at night or when the house is unoccupied can save you a lot of money.

Ceiling Fans

Ceiling fans, which keep your home cool in the summer, can be used in the winter too. Reverse the direction so that the hot air, which naturally rises, is circulated back down again.

If you don't have any fans in your home, Sciuto suggests starting in a solarium or kitchen, rooms that have a tendency to overheat. Install the fans at

the highest point of the ceiling where hot air collects or where there is poor air circulation.

Furnace Filter

Furnaces are most energy-efficient when they are clean and well-maintained. You can easily keep your furnace running efficiently by cleaning or replacing filters at the beginning of the season. Depending on your furnace, some filters need to be cleaned or replaced at least three times a year. You should always follow manufacturers' instructions or seek the advice of an expert when maintaining your furnace.

To clean your filter, remove it from the furnace and visibly inspect it for dirt. "Hold your filter up to a light source. If no light penetrates the filter, it's time to clean it or replace it," says Sciuto. Replacing or cleaning your filter keeps air flowing easily and improves air quality.

Hot Water Tank Energy Savers

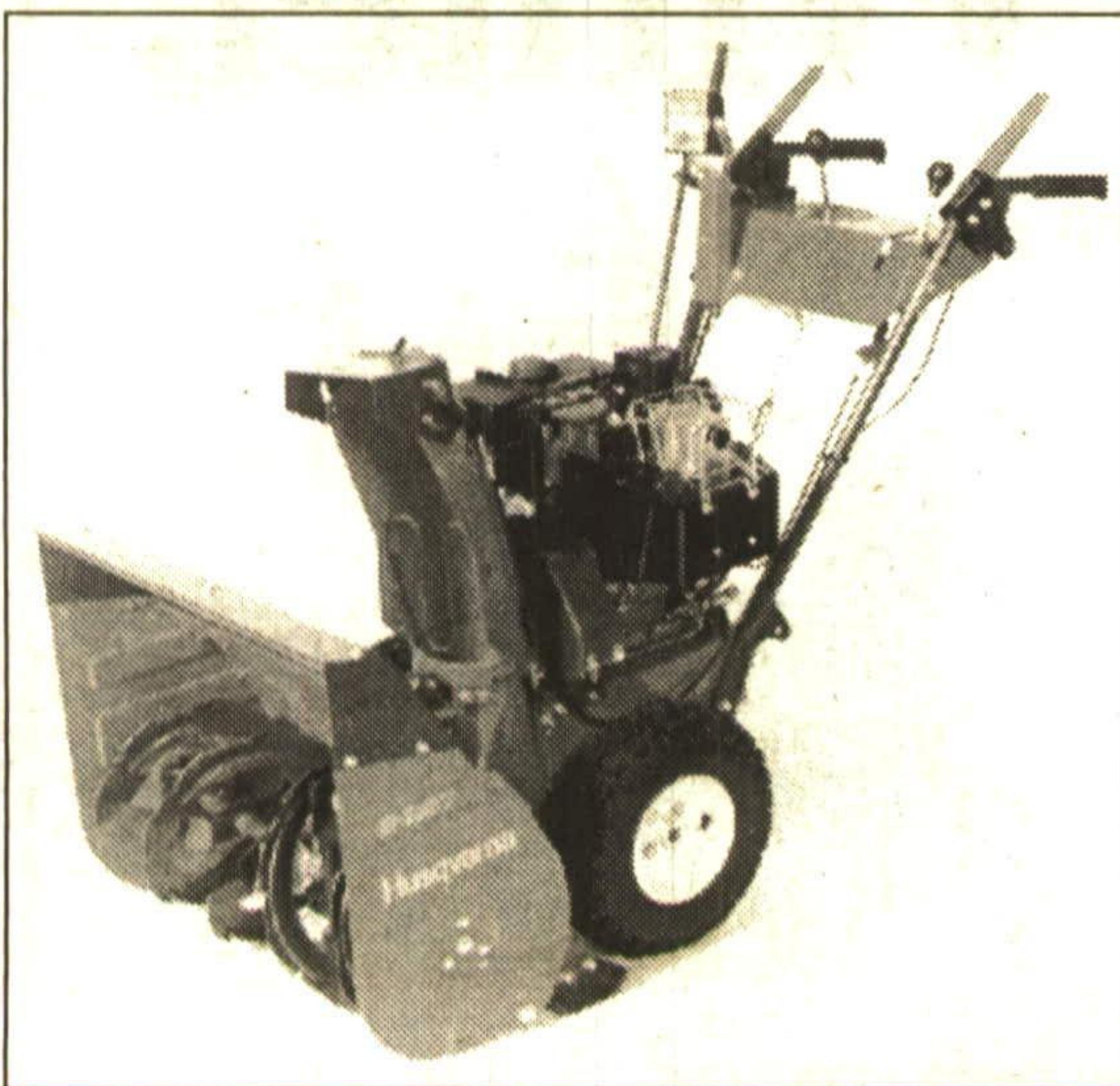
"It's amazing the amount of energy that escapes from your hot water tank, and equally amazing how easy it is to stop it from escaping," says Sciuto.

He offers the following advice: wrap your hot water heater with an easy-to-install insulation blanket to keep the heat in. Also, to help reduce the energy loss caused by hot water cooling before it

See TIPS, pg. 13

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