

Maintenance tips for fall: Protect your home and your investment

Your house is more than the place where you live. It's your home—and your most important investment. And whether you rent or own, carrying out a regular program of maintenance and repairs can help you

protect that investment for as long as you live in your home, and help keep your family safe and sound in every season.

Tanks should be pumped out at least every three years.

This fall, for example, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has a variety of simple tasks you can perform to put a stop to the most common—and costly—problems before they occur, in just a few minutes a week, including:

- Replace window screens with storm windows, and ensure all windows, doors and skylights shut tightly, including the door between your house and garage.

- Ensure that the ground around your home slopes away from the foundation wall to prevent water from draining into the basement.

- Check and clean or replace your furnace filters on a monthly basis.

- Have your furnace or heating system serviced by a qualified service company (every two years for a gas furnace and every year for an oil furnace).



- Bleed air from the hot water radiators, and turn the gas furnace pilot light on.

- Clean leaves from eavestroughs and downspouts to ensure proper drainage from the roof, and check chimneys for nests or other obstructions.

- Cover the outside of air conditioners, and drain and store outdoor hoses. Close the valve to outdoor hose connection, and drain the spigot (unless it is frost proof).

- Vacuum electric baseboard heaters to remove dust, remove the grilles on forced air systems and vacuum inside the ducts.

- Winterize landscaping by storing outdoor furniture, preparing gardens and, if necessary, protecting young trees or bushes for winter.

- If the heat recovery ventilator has been shut off for the summer, clean the filters and the core, and pour water down the condensate drain to test it.

For more information or a free copy of the Ask CMHC About Your Home's Possibilities catalogue, About Your House Home Maintenance Schedule or any of the other About Your House series of fast-and-factual guides covering virtually every fact of owning, maintaining or renovating your home, ask CMHC at 1-800-668-2642 or visit the Web site at www.cmhc.ca

- Have well water tested for quality.

- Check the sump pump and line to ensure proper operation, and that there are no line obstructions or visible leaks.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) is Canada's national housing agency and a source of objective, reliable housing expertise.

- If you have a septic tank, measure the sludge and scum to determine if it needs to be emptied before spring.

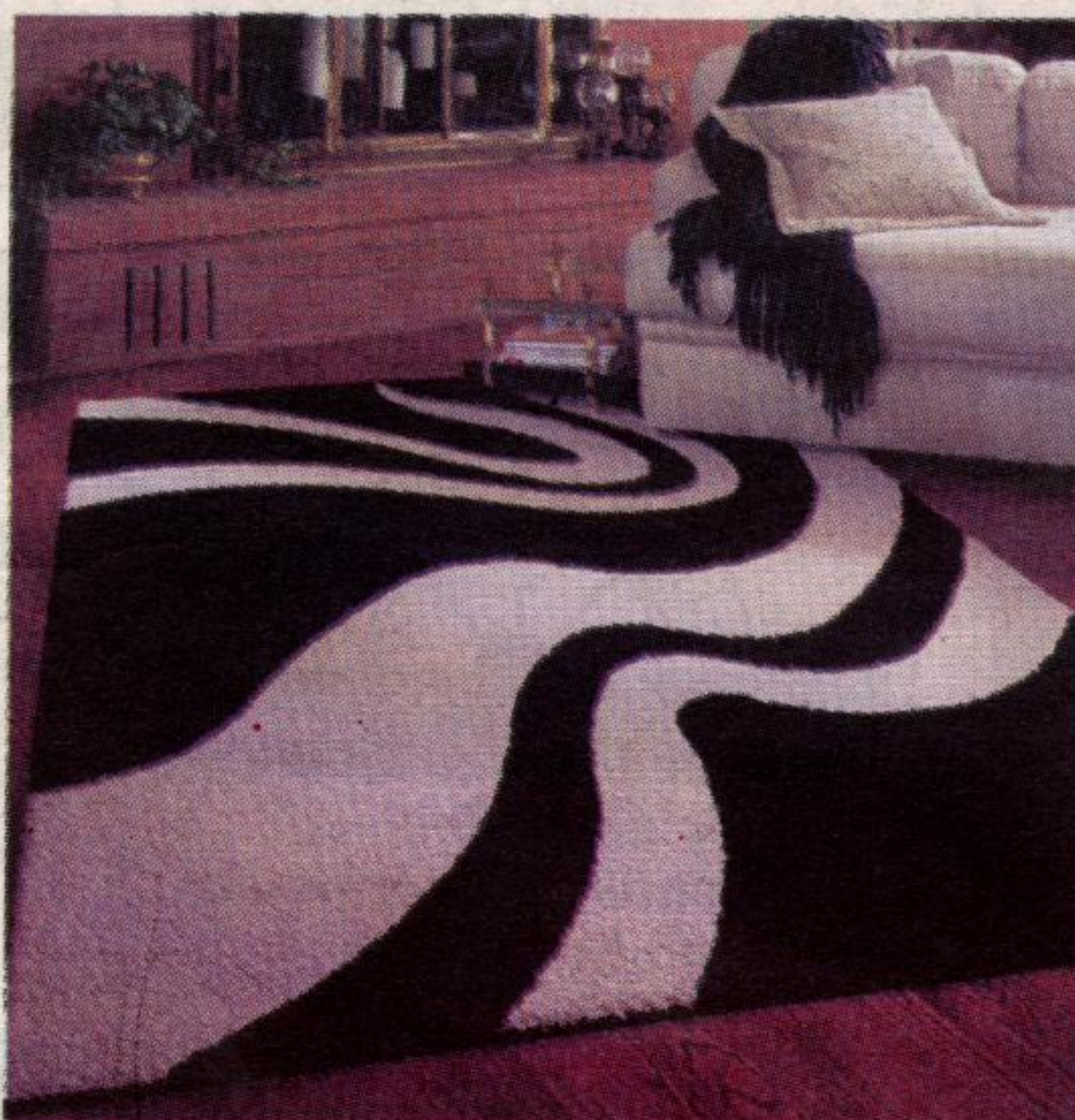
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