

Tired Of High Heating Bills At Your House?

Keeping warm during a long Canadian winter burns up a large chunk of our household budget, especially for homes with baseboard heaters or an electric furnace. Government figures show that the average cost for space heating with electricity ranges from \$695 a year in Vancouver to \$1,950 in central Ontario; higher if you operate an electric water heater or use air conditioning.

Natural gas is relatively inexpensive, and the popularity of oil is increasing as its price drops, but combustion heating contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.

An increasingly popular technology for residential and commercial buildings is an earth energy heat pump, which transfers heat from the ground into your house, at one-third of the cost of all-electric systems. They can also heat domestic water, and a reversing valve provides air conditioning in summer.

The principle is simple: Underground pipes pick up the absorbed solar heat in the ground around your house, bring it back to the unit in your basement, and convert it to heat through a compressor cycle (like your kitchen refrigerator).

You pay only for the power needed to run the components; \$225 to \$795 a year for the locations noted above, with the added benefit of "free" summer cooling and water heating.

Unlike noisy outdoor air source heat pumps, earth energy systems are designed to be most efficient when the temperature drops below freezing. The CoP (co-efficient of performance) indicates the level of efficiency, and regulations allow only efficient units to be sold in Canada. Homeowners praise the quiet operation, low maintenance and lack of drafts, but they rave about the dollar savings.

Earth energy units offer the lowest lifecycle cost of any heating/cooling option and are recognized in the United States as the most environmentally benign technology available, but sales are lagging because of the cost of installation. The total price can range from \$8,000 to \$15,000 (depending on numerous factors), but even a common five-year payback period is too long for many consumers. Most companies offer financing to ensure that monthly charges for installation and operation are lower than what you would pay

to the gas or oil company.

CSA standards regulate the quality of installation, and a recent rebate offered by Ontario Hydro resulted in the purchase of almost 7,000 residential systems, which displace the need for more than 100 MWh of electricity each year for the utility. With better industry standards and higher CoP levels in today's units, this contribution would be at least 50 percent higher.

Earth energy technology is confusing to many Canadians because it is not your typical heating source. They cannot be compared directly to gas and oil units, and many of our basic assumptions (such as the need for a setback thermostat) are changed.

Since 1987, the Canadian Earth Energy Association has promoted the technology as a viable option

for Canada's energy future and has produced material to explain the concepts to homeowners. CEEA's Internet homepage (www.earthenergy.org) offers helpful explanations, and offers a package of information for interested homeowners. CEEA can be contacted in Ottawa at 1-613-230-2332 or (fax) 237-1480.

Wash Day A Chore With Hard Water

Laundry is a chore no matter how you look at it. But when your clothes appear dingy and yellowed, when "soap curd" appears on your clothing, and when fabrics seem to be wearing out more quickly than they should—laundry becomes a real drudgery. These are typical problems in hard-water areas found in many parts of Canada.

Hard water occurs when calcium and magnesium bicarbonate are dissolved in an area's water supply. While hard water does not pose a health risk, it can make household chores—especially laundry—more of a chore than they should be.

First, hard water typically requires the use of more detergent than soft water. Hard water can also leave a residue that combines with laundry soap to leave a "soap curd" which will need to be cleaned off. To do this, extra rinse cycles may be required. This means more water is used, more energy is needed to heat the water for the cycle and run the machine, and there is more

wear and tear on your washing machine.

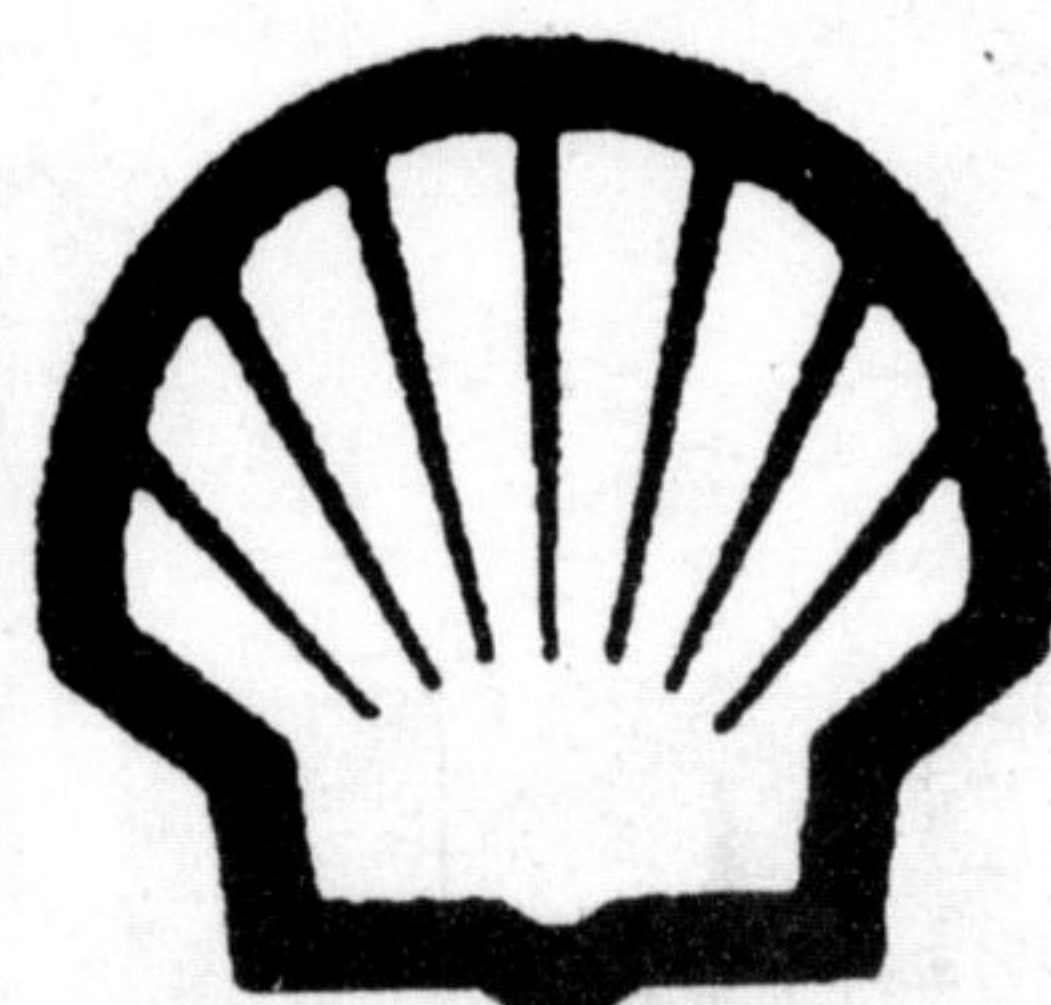
Hard water has a detrimental effect on fabrics. Colours fade more quickly, whites tend to yellow and the fabrics tend to have a shortened life span.

The dissolved minerals in hard water can collect in washing machines (and other water-using appliances, such as dishwashers and coffee makers) and shorten their lives. The buildup of these minerals can clog pipes and cause excessive wear on moving parts.

While laundry will probably never be a favourite activity, some of the headaches can be relieved with a simple change in your household: Switch to soft water. The addition of a water softener to your home can have numerous advantages in the laundry room alone.

If you think you may have a hard-water problem, the first step is to have a certified water specialist come and test your household's water supply. He or she can recommend a treatment system if one is needed.

THERMOSHELL/TWISS FUELS



- Shell Fuels
- 24 Hour Burner Service
- Energy Efficient Testing
- Installations
- Equalized Billing
- Lubricants - Industrial & Commercial



Let us analyze your particular need and recommend fuel-efficient high quality equipment for your oil heating system.

FURNACES: Although they just hide in your basement, they are an essential part of your home. So, to achieve a long life and maximum efficiency, it is worth taking the time to properly maintain them.

1. Change filters regularly.
2. Keep objects such as boxes, paint cans, toys, etc. away from the immediate area
3. Don't enclose in a closet or other small compartment (they must have air and lots of it).
4. Know which fuse or breaker controls your furnace (if it stops working this is the first thing to check).
5. Have your furnace maintained annually by a qualified technician.

**INSTALLATIONS and
HOT WATER HEATERS**
A dependable, safe, efficient and

environmentally friendly way to heat your home

Warm up to

**EFFICIENT
DEPENDABLE
ECONOMICAL**

Oil Heat!

FOR QUALITY PRODUCTS & SERVICE
32 Steeles Avenue, Unit 15, Milton

878-6380 Fax: 878-2788



Your Exclusive AIR MILES Heating Oil Supplier