

# FALL HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Here are some hot tips for buying a new furnace



NC)—If you're about to buy a new furnace, here are some hot tips to help you make the best choice for your budget.

You probably already know that your furnace uses more energy than any other household appliance. The cost of that energy depends on several factors that vary from year to year — the cost of energy, the severity of the weather, the efficiency of your heating system and your own living habits. Despite these fluctuations, you

can take a giant step toward controlling your heating bill by buying the most energy-efficient furnace you can find.

Here are some questions to consider before buying a furnace:

- o How big a furnace do you need? You can reduce the amount of energy it takes to heat your home by air sealing and adding insulation to your home. If you take these steps before you size your new furnace, you may find you can buy a smaller, more inexpensive unit that works more efficiently and cuts your heating bills.

- o How well is your heat distribution system working? Follow manufacturers' instructions for the maintenance of your system. You should also clean and replace any filters in your system or equipment about once a month during the heating season.

- o What can you expect to pay for different kinds of fuel? Your local suppliers of oil, natural gas, electricity, propane and firewood should be able to tell you the cost of delivering fuel to your door.

- o Which type of furnace is the most efficient? Older oil and natural gas furnaces capture about 60 percent of the heat in the energy they burn, but the latest models can achieve 83 to 89 percent efficiency for oil and 89 to 96 percent efficiency for gas. The best propane furnaces are 87 to 94 percent efficient, and many wood stoves reach levels of 70 to 80 percent efficiency. Electric furnaces and baseboard heaters are considered 100 percent efficient, but electricity prices in your area may prevent them from being a cost-effective alternative for heating your whole house. Heat pumps reach efficiencies as high as 260 percent. Energy Star® qualified furnaces are the most energy efficient on the market today.

Every time you burn fossil fuels such as oil or natural gas, your heating system produces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. Canadians are being asked to do their bit to protect the environment by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by one tonne per year — the One Tonne Challenge. So buying an efficient furnace and maintaining it properly is also a great way to limit your

impact on the environment and make your contribution toward the One Tonne Challenge. That means every Canadian can make a big difference — right now and for future generations — by making the right energy efficiency choices today.

Choosing the right furnace is an important energy-saving decision, but there are many other ways to save energy and make your home a healthier, more comfortable place.

EnerGuide for Houses advisors can perform a thorough energy assessment of your home, model the results through a computer program and give you unbiased advice on the best way to cut down your heating and cooling needs. The service includes a "blower door" test that helps identify air leaks that you can seal for even better energy savings. EnerGuide for

Houses advisors can also provide you with a heat load calculation to help you choose the correct size of furnace for your home.

To learn more or to find an energy advisor near you, visit the EnerGuide for Houses Web site at [energuide-forhouses.gc.ca](http://energuide-forhouses.gc.ca), or call 1 800 387-2000 toll-free (995-2943 in the National Capital Region).

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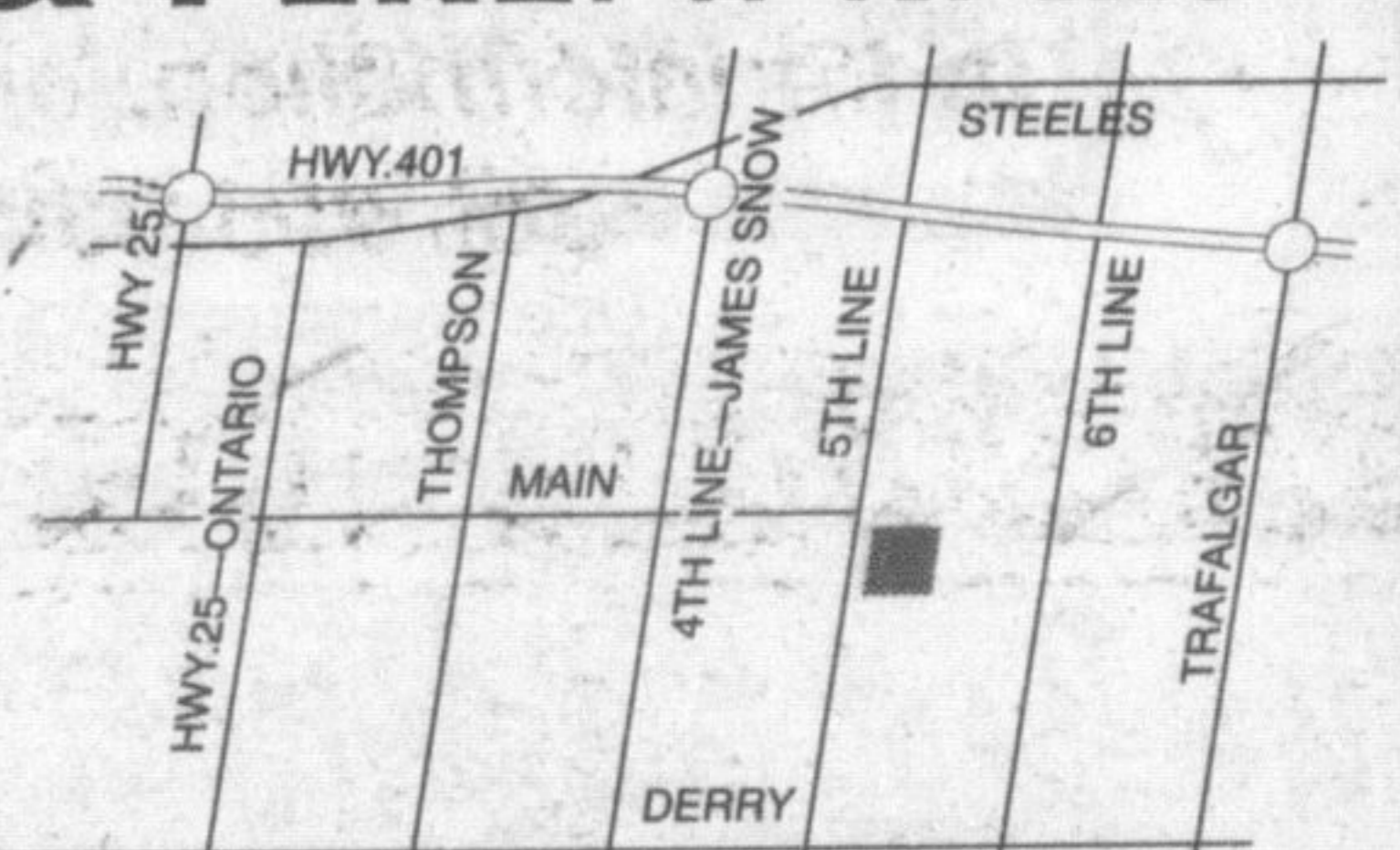
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