

# Many local homes still don't have working smoke alarms: fire chief tells committee

By MELANIE HENNESSEY  
The Champion

Almost 10 per cent of Milton homes local firefighters visited last year didn't have working smoke alarms, according to the town's fire chief.

This was one of the statistics Chief Larry Brassard presented to the Town's community services committee last week in a presentation on the department's 2005 smoke alarm program.

Chief Brassard said firefighters visited more than 1,300 homes last year through Milton's 'Home Safe Home' residential smoke alarm program, which is designed to educate residents and check compliance with provincial legislation.

He noted 2005 marked the first time his staff went out into the rural area for inspections.

"By all accounts, that was very successful," he said.

But he said of the homes visited, about 10 per cent, or 130 homes, didn't have working smoke alarms.

"That's a statistic we're not satisfied with," he remarked.

In addition, a staff report from Chief Brassard to the committee noted, "Anecdotal information from some individual crews indicates that in certain areas of Milton roughly 30 per cent of the homes visited had no working alarms."

Ward 3 Councillor Jan Mowbray asked whether the Town should start handing out fines to those who don't have working smoke alarms.

While Chief Brassard said enforcement is an issue the department is considering, he said writing tickets isn't an activity that currently takes place anywhere in Halton.

"Here, we prefer to take the approach of education," he said.

Ward 1 Councillor Rick Day speculated that some people may have smoke alarms that work "too well," which go off when someone is having a shower and then that

person disconnects it.

Chief Brassard said it's all a matter of where the smoke detector is placed. He added if a person is having the problem that Mr. Day referred to, the local fire department can go out and speak to them to address the issue.

## New smoke alarm rules soon

The committee also heard that as of March, Miltonians will have to have a smoke alarm installed on every floor of their home due to upcoming changes to the Ontario Fire Code.

"We applaud that initiative," noted Chief Brassard, adding it's something the department has been asking for for years.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at [mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com).

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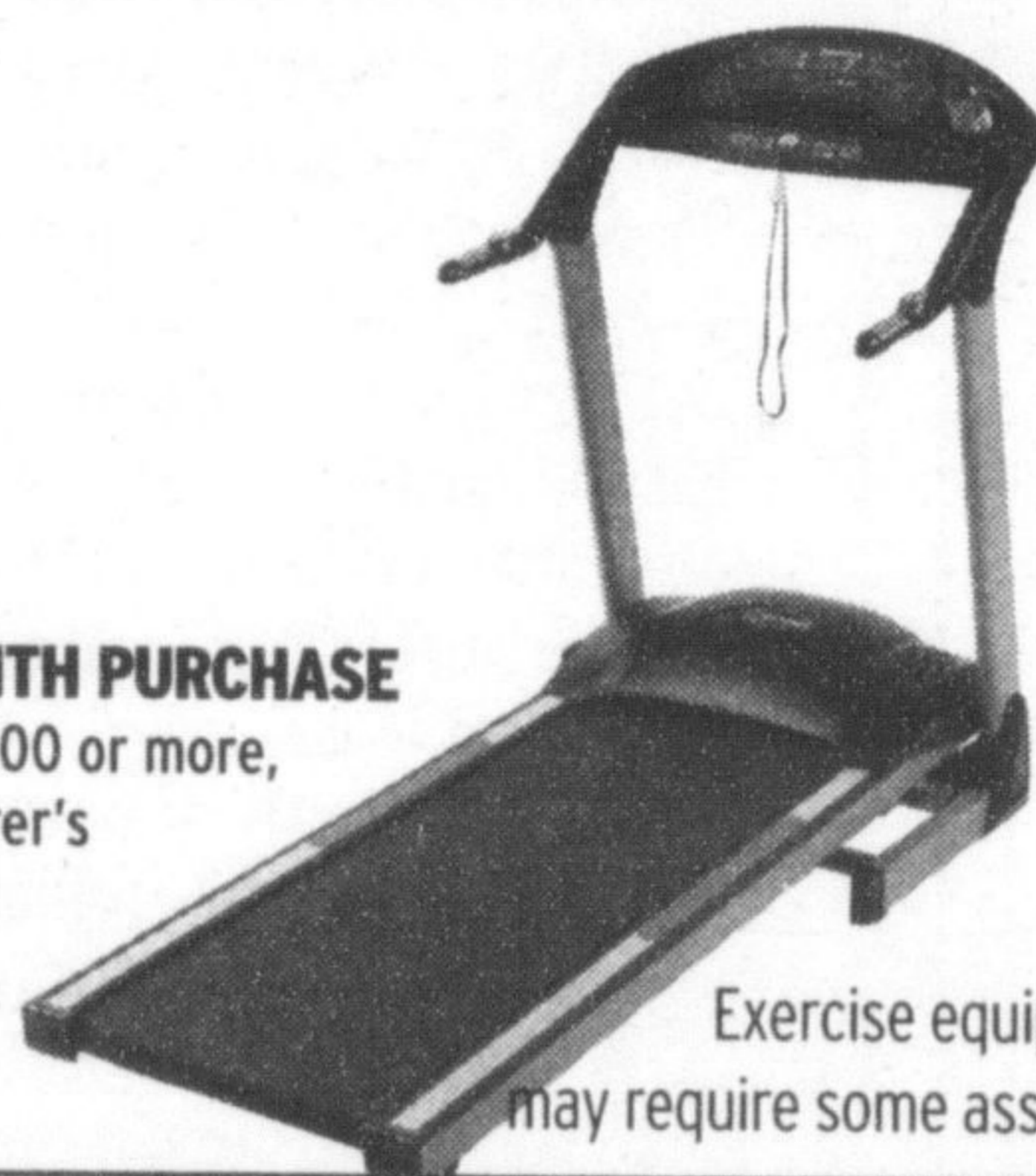
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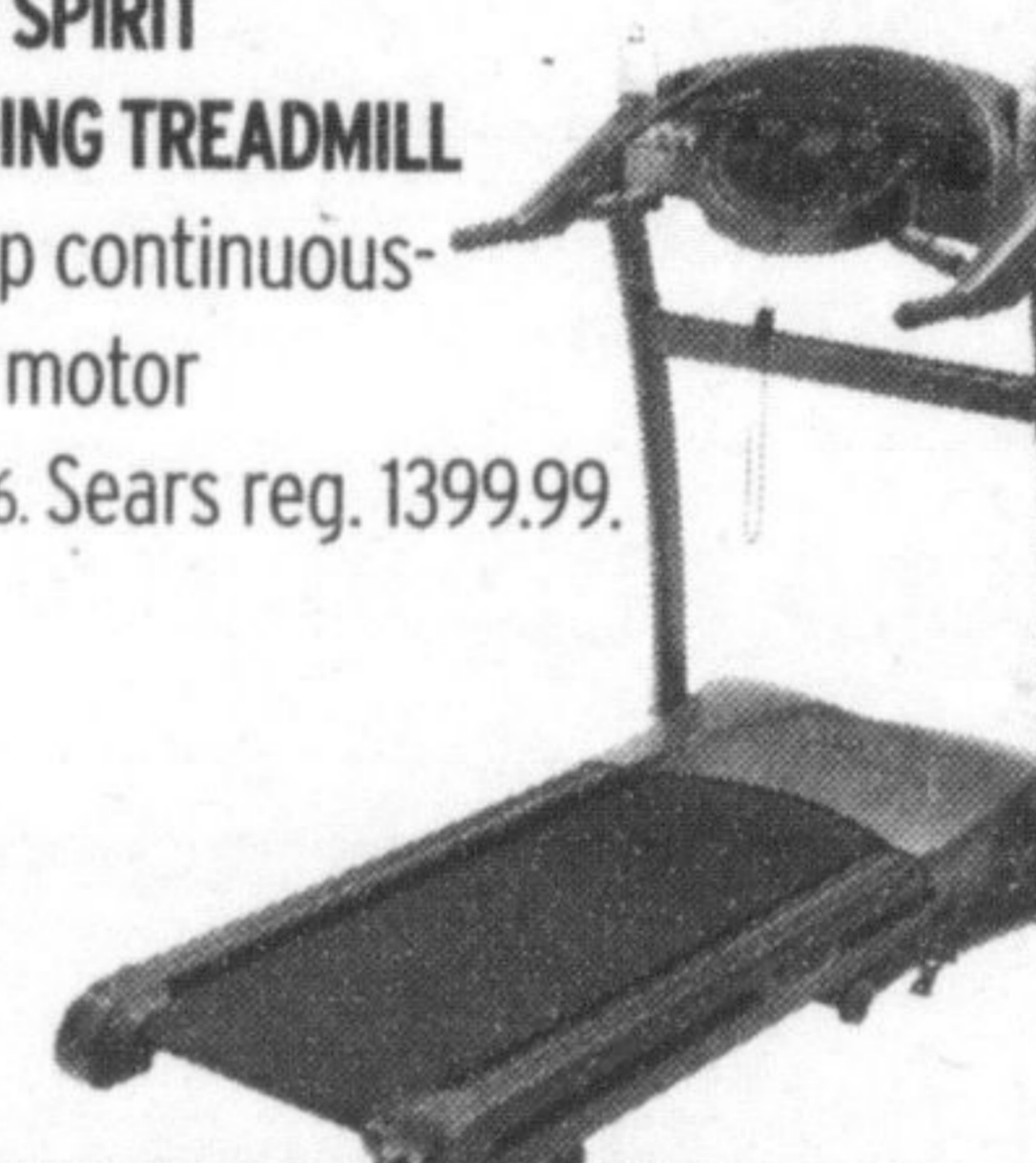
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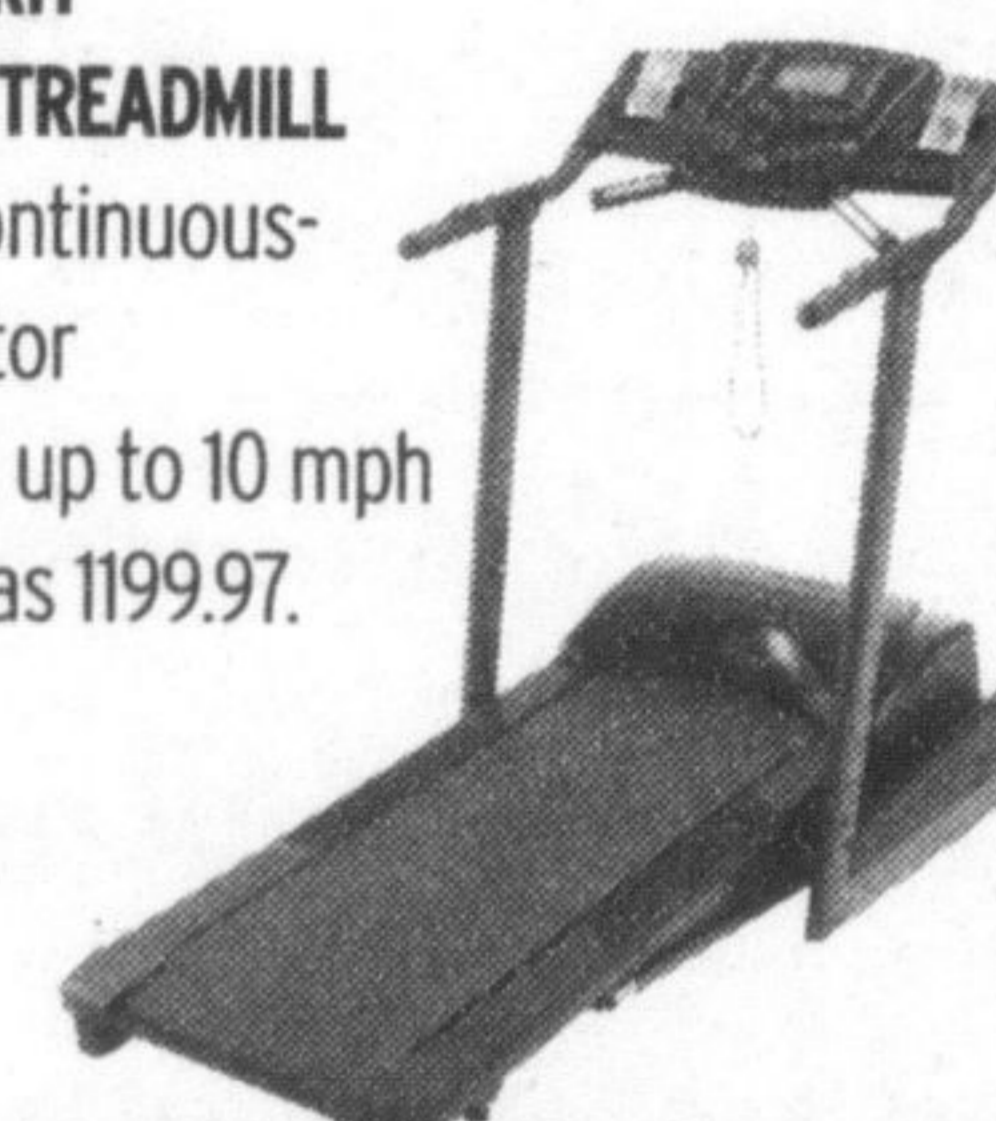
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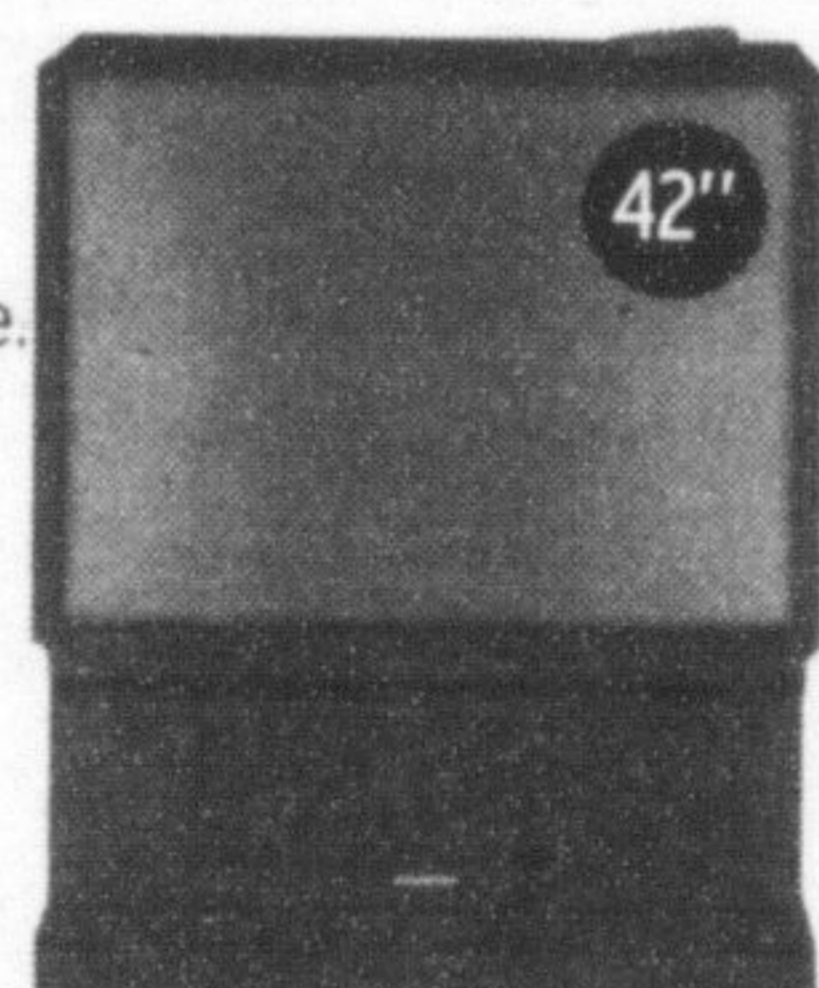
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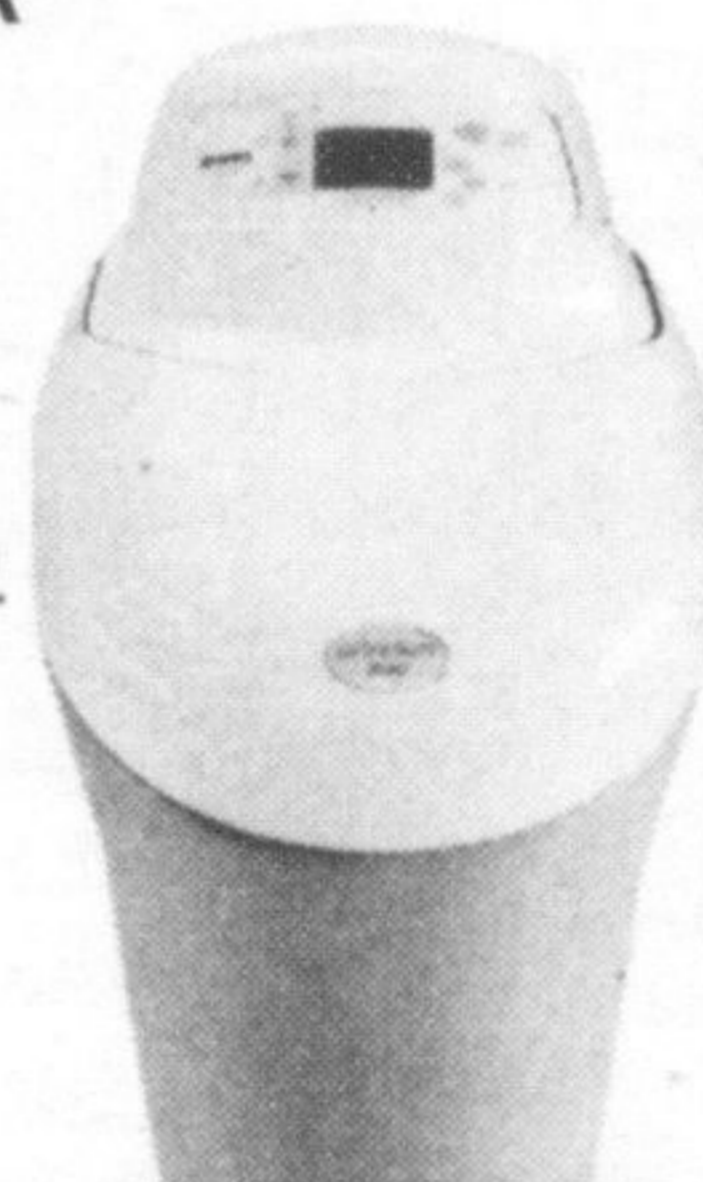
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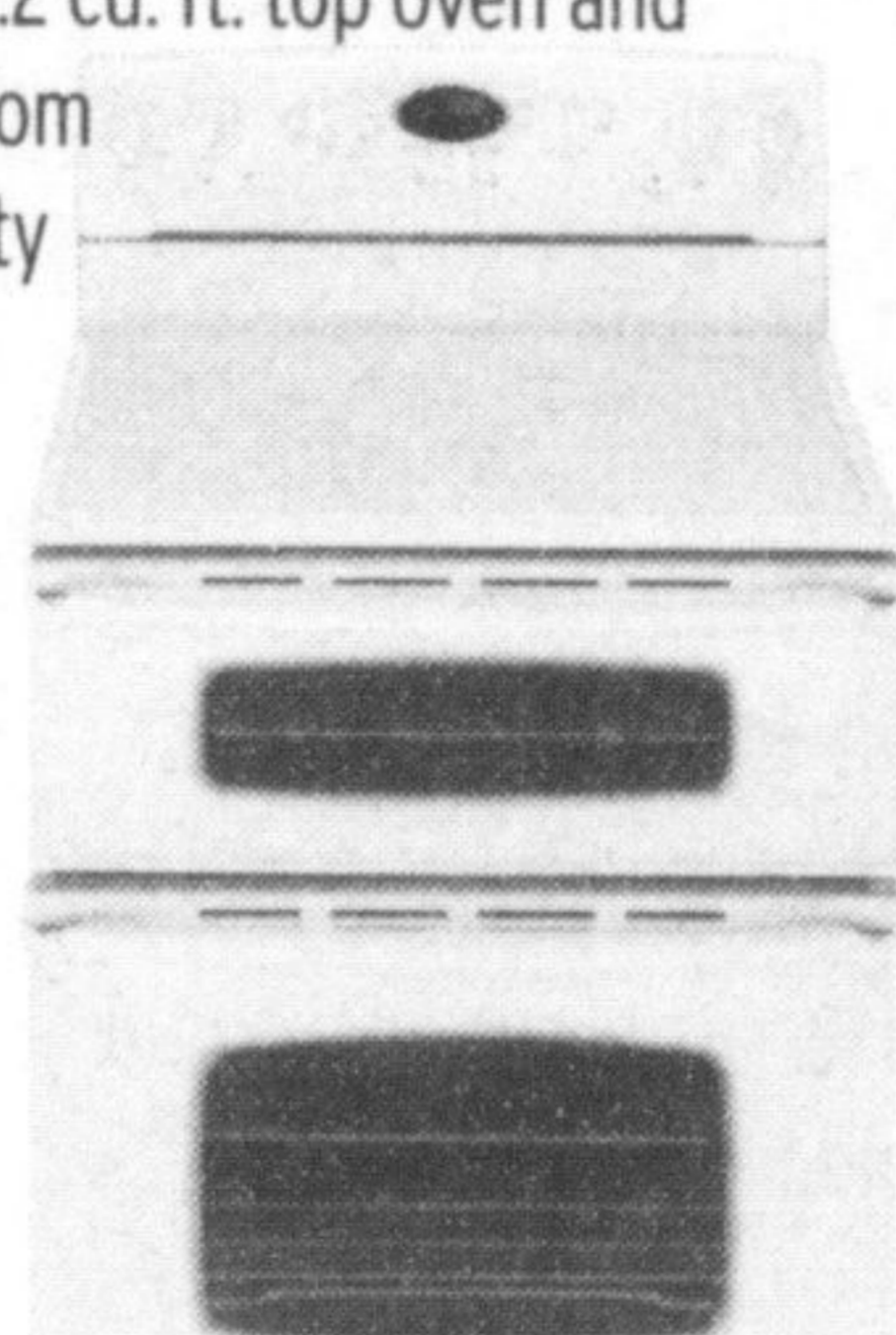
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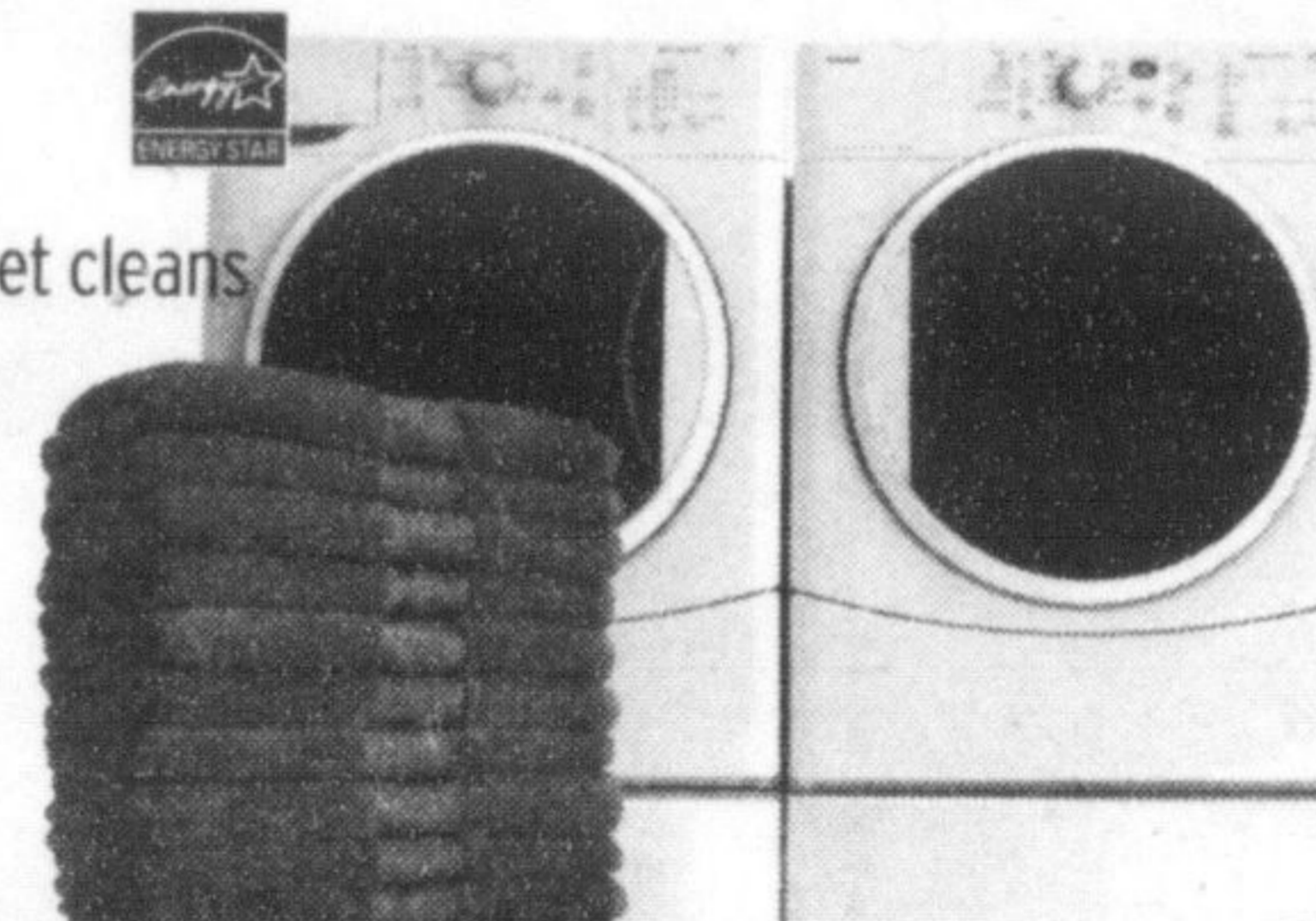
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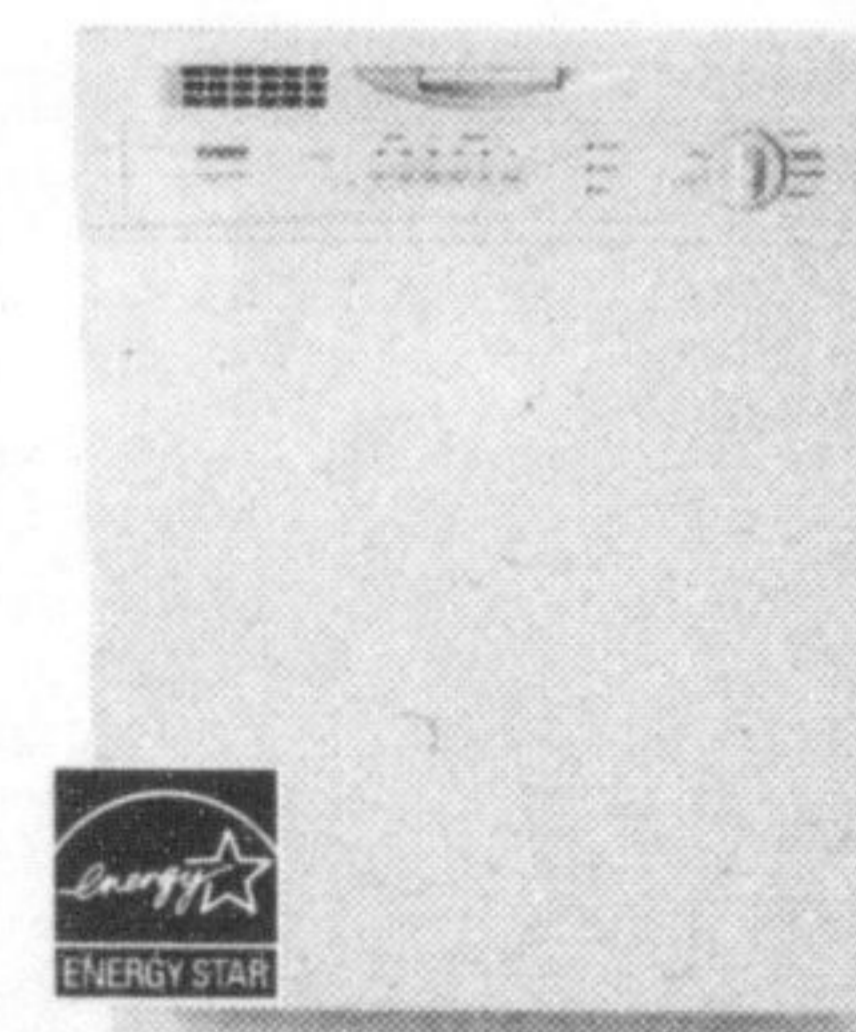
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