

New tigers coming for your tank

The tiger in your tank doesn't have to be gasoline. Already, propane is available at service stations throughout the province and natural gas for vehicles is expected to be on tap soon. Even alcohol, still a fuel of the future, may one day power your car.

Propane has several advantages over gasoline, not the least of which is cost. Propane is about 40 per cent cheaper at the pump and, even though it offers 20 per cent lower mileage, will still save money. Its clean-burning qualities can add to engine life and fewer oil changes are needed.

More than 25,000 Ontario cars, vans and trucks are now running on propane and more conversions are taking place each month.

Federal and provincial incentives to convert to alternative fuels gave a boost to propane conversions beginning in 1980. At that time the Ontario government removed the sales tax on vehicles powered by alternative fuels (and later on propane conversion kits too) and the road tax on alternative fuels.

Propane is an attractive fuel because it is part of the natural gas stream, still plentiful supply in Canada. In fact, 20 per

cent of our propane comes from the refinery process.

Conversion to propane kits cost between \$1200 and \$1800, with lower overall fuel costs, the payback period is usually short.

The Ontario government recently ran a Drive Propane Demonstration to assess propane's performance in commercial vehicles.

Feedback from the drivers of over 300 propane-powered cars, vans and trucks from 25 commercial and government fleets indicated propane was a satisfactory and safe alternative to gasoline. The vehicles averaged an increase in fuel consumption of 24 per cent but the average fuel cost saving was \$1200 per vehicle annually.

By 1987, the Ontario government expects to have 2,000 of its own vehicles operating on propane. The provincial goal is 40,000 by 1985, a target which will in all probability be exceeded.

Alcohol is still more expensive than gasoline as an alternative fuel for your car. It is not as readily available as propane but should still be kept in mind as a supply for the future.

In anticipation of the day when alcohol

fuels will compete with gasoline, the Ontario government is conducting experiments to demonstrate the production and use of alcohol in private cars, farm equipment and commercial vehicles.

Alcohol's appeal is its readily availability in Ontario—from forests, agricultural resources or municipal waste. Unlike crude oil, most of which has to be imported, alcohol would have a predictable cost and supply.

As the cost of non-renewable fuels rises, alcohol fuels are likely to become more attractive. Ontario wants to be ready.

The alcohol options for Ontario in the future are likely to be:

—gasohol—a mixture of 90 per cent unleaded gasoline and 10 per cent waterless ethanol.

—methanol and gasoline blend—methanol now manufactured from natural gas is quite expensive. Methanol from municipal garbage is a future possibility although the technology needs further work.

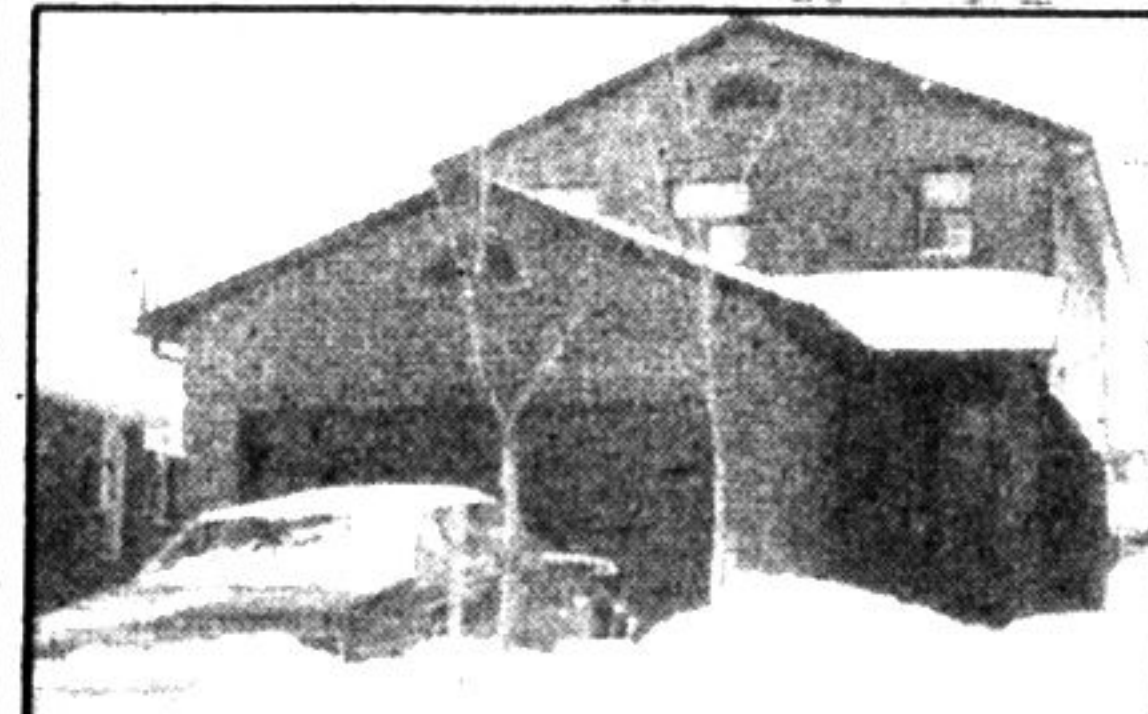
—straight methanol—a highly corrosive and poisonous alcohol, it can be made from natural gas, coal, peat or wood.

Real Estate

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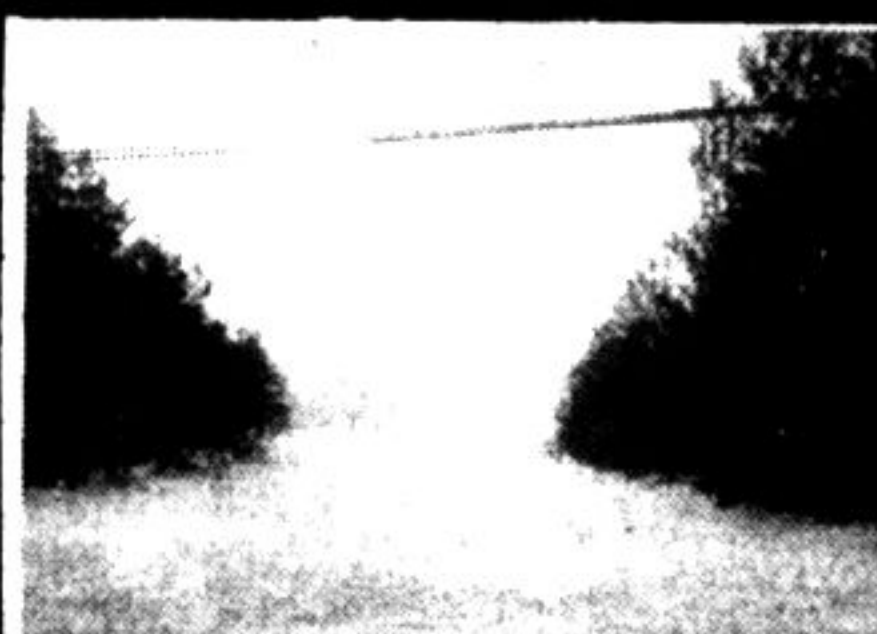
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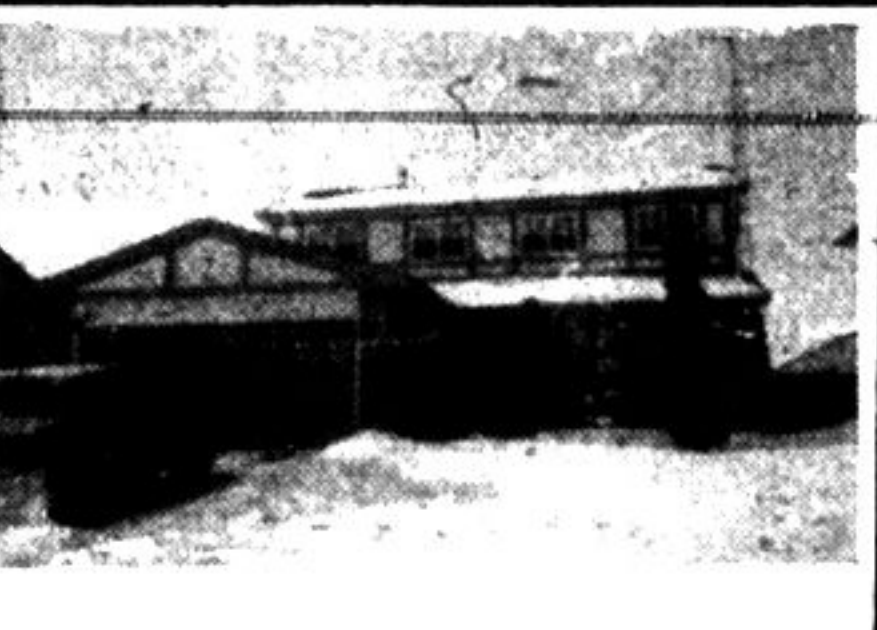
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