

A million reasons to get your furnace checked now



Dave Walton of Direct Energy

Here's a chilling statistic from Dave Walton, Director of Home Ideas for Direct Energy Essential Home Services.

"Over a million furnaces break down in Ontario every year," he says. "As temperatures start to dip in late September and early October, many prime timers will be shocked when they flick the switch and their dormant furnace doesn't work."

What happens then, says Walton, is the usual mad rush for servicing (traditionally starting the first week in October) which can leave many consumers waiting because

service rep schedules are overloaded.

"It's important to act now," he says "and start up your furnace early in the season. Even if you're going south for the winter, you should make sure now that your furnace is in top working condition for when you return."

In the meantime, if your furnace doesn't start, it may be something relatively simple. Walton suggests these six ways to diagnose the problem yourself:

1. Make sure the furnace power switch is in the "On" or "Heat" position.
2. Some thermostats run on batteries. Make sure they have a charge, replace them right away if they don't, and try to start the furnace again.
3. Turn the thermostat up high enough to

allow the furnace to start.

4. Inspect your registers and radiators to ensure that they're free from obstacles such as rugs, furniture and drapes that might restrict air circulation.

5. Check to see if warm air is leaving the vents.

6. Inspect your electrical fuse box for a faulty furnace fuse or circuit breaker.

If your furnace still doesn't work, call a reputable service company. But before you phone, do your homework, says Walton. "You'll likely be asked how old your furnace is, where it's located, the last time you changed the filter and if this is the first time you're requesting maintenance this year."

Act now – and you won't be left out in the cold!

We'd like to hear from you

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Please e-mail any comments or suggestions you might have to improve our publication to the editor, Tony Curcio:

acurcio@telsec.net.

We can't promise to answer all reader e-mails, but every one will be read and considered.

We value your opinions.

Gorgeous, upscale development promises to add new luxury to Muskoka cottage life

A spectacular new development called The Landscapes, which is scheduled to officially open in June of 2006 on Lake of Bays, Muskoka (1020 Birch Glen Rd., Baysville) is promising to be one of the area's most attractive, sought-after vacation communities.

The site's many exclusive amenities will include sandy beaches, a year round indoor/outdoor pool, fitness centre, clubhouse, docks, lakeside boardwalks, tennis courts, activity trails and more.

"We're very proud that The Landscapes reflects the priorities and even the dreams of the participants in our downtown Toronto focus groups" said Titos Tylans, President of The Landscapes Corporation. "They have helped The Landscapes to shape the Muskoka experience for years to come."

The Landscapes is another example of the growing popularity of fractional or shared ownership. Owners have a 1/10 share or interval of their designed and furnished cottage or cottage villa. This entitles them to five weeks' exclusive use of the cottage residence each year. Shares can be kept forever, sold or willed to someone else.

Another bonus: Through various agreements, ownership allows members to exchange any weeks for others of their choice in some of the best resorts around the world.

Membership also entitles owners to discounts on such perks as private jet rentals, yacht charters, elite automobile rentals, Abercrombie & Kent worldwide travel and access to premier sporting events.



The Maple Cottage at The Landscapes, Lake of Bays.

The first phase of The Landscapes project will include the construction of ten residences plus the clubhouse, which is part of the planned recreation complex. The ten residences will be in the form of two detached cottages and two four-unit cottage villas. These residences are on the waterfront and have two or three bedrooms, open kitchens, two fireplaces and outdoor decks.

"The clubhouse will be at the centre of The Landscapes" explains Tylans. "When people want to mingle with the community, the clubhouse will offer a luxurious gathering space complete with fireplace, comfortable armchairs, a billiards table and even a library loft."

This community space can host parties and family celebrations and will likely be the hub of The Landscapes. The other big attraction will be the indoor/outdoor swimming pool, sauna and fitness centre," he feels. "All areas provide great opportunities to meet and make friends with other owners."

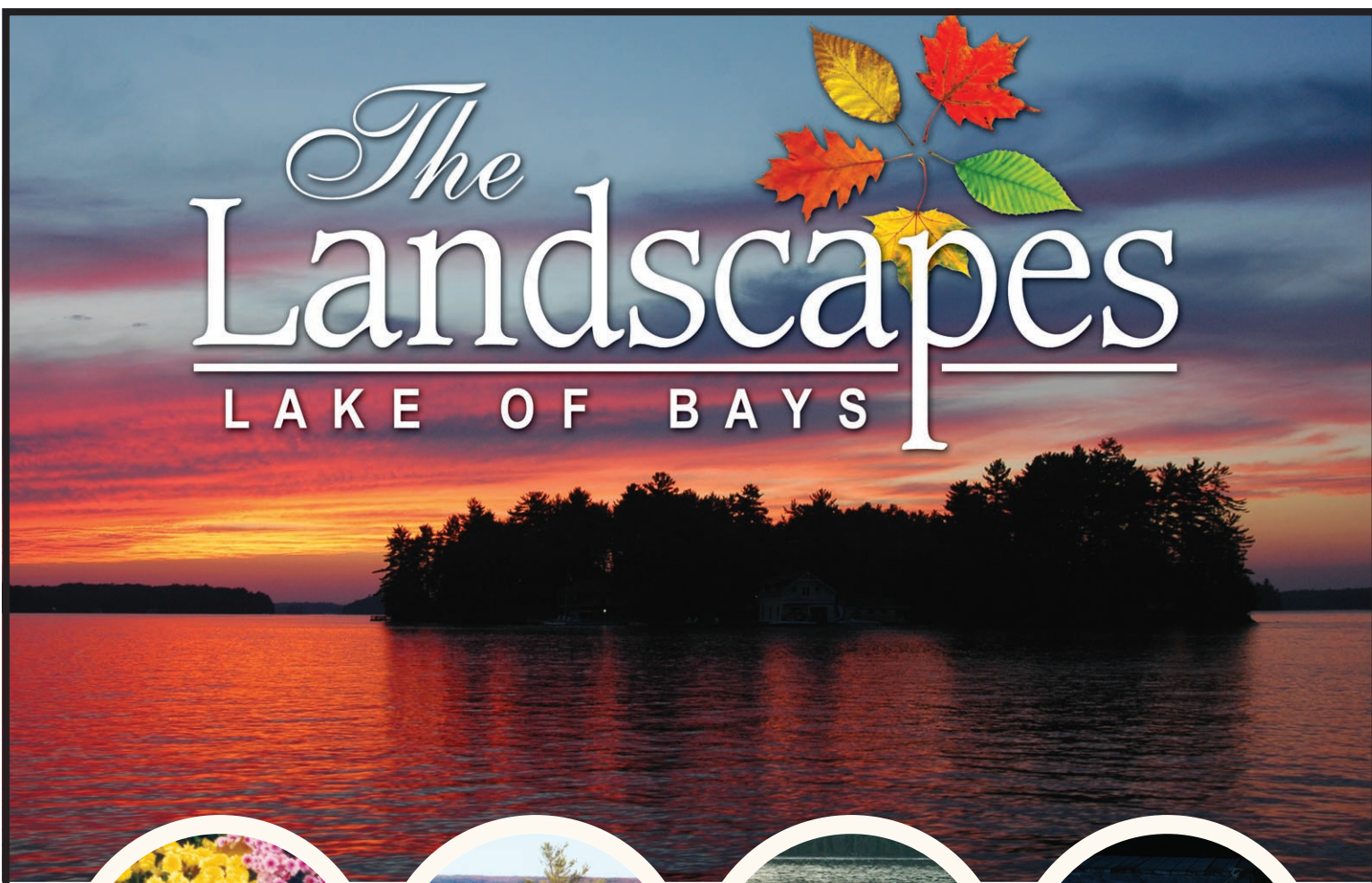
The Muskoka area is home to a variety of sports and all-season activities. Prime Timers can enjoy curling, indoor ice skating, snowmobiling and even dog-sledding, in addition to the traditional summer sports and pastimes.

If golf is your sport, you can choose from no less than 18 breathtaking golf courses in the area, designed of varying lengths and difficulty.

If you enjoy shopping, everything from hats to willow furniture is available. No matter what time of the year, Muskoka stores are open. You'll discover antiques, art galleries, book stores, crafts, furniture, gardening, home decorating supplies and clothing stores.

One of the most popular places, says Tylans, is famous Algonquin Park. But there's also Arrowhead Provincial Park, numerous cruises and boat tours, Muskoka Lakes Museum, Santa's Village and more. Many local artisans have studios in the area.

For more information, visit www.thelandscapes.ca or call 1-800-410-2407.



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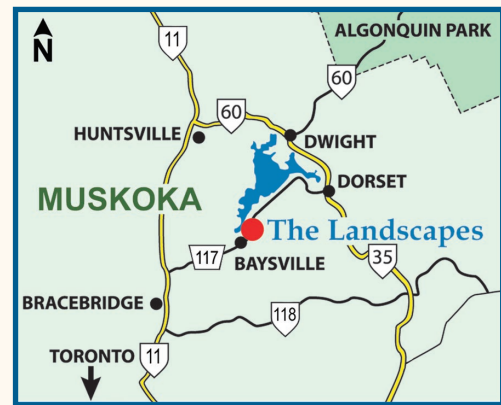


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