



WE'VE SPENT THE PAST NINE MONTHS OR SO LOOKING OUTWARD. First, at snowdrifts shrinking to unveil a surprise of spring blossoms beneath, and then at the pretty picture postcard that is summer. More recently, our eyes have scanned the horizon for colourful tapestries created by changing leaves.

But now is the time many of us take to our homes, hiding out and hunkering down in a standoff against winter and winter weather. This is the time when home is at the heart of so many of our activities, whether it's enjoying get-togethers for families home for the holidays, binging on Netflix in our sleep pants, celebrating the new year, or poring over décor magazines and Pinterest while planning upcoming decorating or renovating projects.

Think of it as the Season of Our Homes.

But this progression from the old year into the new, with one foot still in the past as we take a tentative step into our future, is a reminder of the cyclical nature of things. Our lives are filled with times when we leave, only to return. We've seen that over the holidays, with adult children returning, only to leave again.

Our main stories in this issue are a reflection of that ebb and flow. In our Home and Builder feature, you'll meet one young couple who, years after they left the nest, are now living together – but very separately – with their parents. And wait until you see their homes; no granny flat for these young retirees. Many think this style of living arrangement will become the norm in years to come, as parents age out to enjoy a healthy retirement and many young couples just starting out are finding rising property costs burdensome.

And our Feature Home story spotlights a couple who built what they consider to be their last home, not far from the summer camp where they first met as teenagers. Calling it their legacy, they hope it'll one day be shared jointly by their children. But for now, it's the constant in four busy lives lived in three cities over two provinces.

This issue marks something of a homecoming for me, personally, as well. Years ago, I started out writing about homes and décor before a meandering career path took me through creative twists and a sharp turn or two. It now appears I've come full circle and I'm chuffed to say I'm working with some of the most creative and generous people in the industry – not to mention, thrilled to be writing about the things I've always loved. Joining OUR HOMES here in Ottawa feels like I've returned to something familiar and welcoming. It's a feeling like no other when you feel like you're back where you belong.

Home. Again. Hope yours is a happy one, filled with love and lasting memories this season.

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HEATING & COOLING

Winter chill setting in? Tips on how to keep your family warm this winter

Whole home solutions offer most reliable comfort for your home.

Mike Jovic, Home Comfort Advisor with Reliance Holmes Heating & Cooling and Licensed Gas Technician, offers his advice on how to be warm and comfortable during winter.



No question, one of the great benefits of living in Ottawa is the great beauty of the seasons. However, winter in our Capital is long and at times, downright freezing. That is why it is essential to be able to rely on warmth and comfort when you retreat indoors to your home.

Tune-up your furnace for peak performance

Reliance Holmes technicians offer a comprehensive 12-point furnace tune-up that involves cleaning and inspection of major components.

An annual tune-up helps you avoid expensive repairs, ensures that your furnace is running smoothly and efficiently so that it will keep your family warm all winter long.

Additionally, a tune-up gives you peace of mind with an honest assessment of your furnace's functionality and whether or not it should be replaced.

Is it time to replace my furnace?

As a rule of thumb, if your system is 10 years old or more, it's a good idea to consider replacing your unit. Efficient use deteriorates over time and advances in energy efficiency on new models are developing at a rapid pace.

Signs other than age that you may need to replace include strange sounds coming from your furnace, service issues and lack of air flow or heat distribution. Keep on alert for hot and cold spots throughout your home that indicate uneven heating.

Benefits of high efficiency furnace

Heating costs account for a large chunk of household expenses, so the sheer cost savings are

a compelling benefit. The new fan motors provide better air flow, are quieter and are 20 percent less costly to operate. Increasing the financial benefits are utility and SaveonEnergy rebates.

Additionally, high efficiency furnaces have longer life spans and are kinder to the environment.

Consider add-ons, like humidifiers. They can make a home two degrees warmer, while removing dryness and static electricity and protecting wood floors and furniture.

Cold weather means that all components of your home need to be ready



Insulate your Home

Cold weather means that all components of your home need to be ready, like your plumbing and your water heater.

A frozen pipe that bursts can be costly and inconvenient. Ensure that you've got even heating throughout your home; consider wrapping exposed pipes in insulation; make sure that exterior plumbing (i.e. garden hoses) is switched off for the winter. If you plan to travel, turn off the water, drain the pipes and keep the furnace running. Simply turning the water off still makes your pipes vulnerable.

Newer hot water tanks are often insulated, but if you have an older tank, you may want to consider insulating it or applying a water heater insulation blanket.

When taking on these tasks, there is untold value to getting the guiding hand of Reliance's established professionals. Our team makes being abreast on the most current technologies the cornerstone of our business. This is one of the operational pillars for Reliance Holmes Heating & Cooling, and we are always happy to share our knowledge with you.

Reliance Holmes Heating & Cooling provides whole home solutions that include heating, cooling, hot water, plumbing, water treatment and more.



Mike Jovic provides professional Home Comfort Solutions for the Ottawa region.

Mike and the Reliance Holmes Heating & Cooling team can meet with you to discuss various heating, cooling and hot water solutions.

For more information call 613-266-8317 or contact Mike at MJovic@reliancecomfort.com