

TEAM TIRY TIDBITS

THE Housing Market is looking to be another STRONG YEAR!

We are seeing the same market trend as recent years with a shortage of homes for sale, historic low interest rates and a healthy supply of buyers waiting to buy homes as they list. This will all bring another strong year for sellers and an expected market appreciation of home values.

A new program we are starting to roll out to our customers is E-Property Watch. Many of you are familiar with watching online investments, bank accounts balances and growth over periods of time by periodically logging in and checking how your investments are doing. **Wouldn't it be nice to be able to do that with your home's value?** Now you can! Let's face it, for most of us, our home is one of our largest investments. Over time, we can gain a lot of equity which some owners need to use to either buy a new home, consolidate debt, use for stretching living costs in retirement and the list goes on from there.

E-Property Watch uses an online Automatic Valuation Model (AVM) that adjusts your home's value going forward based on market data. The system will assign an automatic value to your property which is called an AVM. I can adjust the number going forward to be more accurate, such as setting it to your purchase price if you recently purchased or if you refinanced and have a new appraisal value. Going forward, this will allow you to monitor it month to month to see the updated value so you can know/plan for those future changes in your life.

Another added feature of the program is that it pulls county recorded mortgages so you can see what mortgages are recorded against your home. This can act as another tool for monitoring your home from fraudulent/incorrect mortgages being recorded against your property. There is also a tool to edit your mortgage balance so you can estimate your equity in your home which is another nice feature.

The AVM value is not a true market value to set your price to sell your home. You will still need to contact us to establish market value when, and if, the time comes that you need to sell. We will dig into your home's updates, added features, etc so we can appropriately price your home when the time arises.

Please let us know if you would like this feature set up for your home by sending the enclosed card back to us or by sending us a message.

Take care, Aaron & Cheree



NEW BUYER beware!

Don't delay on getting preapproved. Just because you say you're in the browsing stage of buying a home doesn't mean the home of your dreams won't fall into your lap. If you find a home that you love before you've been approved for a home loan, you may be out of luck. Due to a low inventory of homes across the country, competition is high, so don't delay getting preapproved.

Don't ignore closing costs. Closing costs, which can involve a wide variety of fees, are often forgotten during the excitement of the homebuying experience. Many people focus strictly on the down payment costs when shopping, but escrow, application and inspection fees may apply to you during the closing process. Be sure to budget for these extra expenses.

If you're looking to become a first-time homeowner, it's easy to get excited, and in the process, get ahead of yourself. There are several financial aspects you must examine when navigating the purchasing process. Here are a few important warnings, or homebuying 'don'ts,' that you should consider.

Don't forget about month-to-month costs. Whether it's normal living expenses or taxes, insurance and homeowner's association fees, you'll be spending money related to your home on a monthly basis. Expenses such as utility costs for water and electricity often get overlooked when purchasing a home. Less essential costs such as landscaping/lawn care are also lurking. So be prepared to re-search all of these potential monthly bills prior to closing.

Don't try to do it yourself. You may save money buying a home with no professional help, but it can turn into a nightmare. Not knowing the ins and outs of real estate transactions could come back to haunt you if another party takes advantage of your lack of knowledge. Unless you have extensive experience in real estate, the smart move is to always consult a professional to assist you with all facets of buying a home.

HOME CARE myths

Realtor.com® shares 7 top home care myths that are a waste of your time and money.

1..Stone countertops are indestructible In fact, stone countertops are easy to stain and scratch. Plus, regular household cleaners and mildly acidic substances, like soda, coffee and wine, can dull stone surfaces over time.

2..Your smoke detector's test button is foolproof The test button tells you the sound is working, not if the sensor that detects smoke is working. Use real smoke to check it. Light a match, blow it out and hold it near the detector. If the alarm goes off, it's working.

3..Gutter guards are maintenance-free Gutter guards may keep out leaves, but small debris can still get through. It's best to clean them every two years — or once a year if your home is surrounded by trees — to prevent damage to your gutters.

4..A lemon is a great way to clean a disposal A lemon's acidic juice will corrode the metal parts of your disposal, and coffee grounds will accumulate in pipes and clog them. The best natural cleaner is baking soda, which will clean the blades but won't damage the metal.

5..Mow your lawn short and you'll mow less often It's important to leave 1 to 3 inches of grass above the roots to keep your lawn lush. Removing more will leave your grass too weak to withstand weeds and pests. It also exposes the roots to the sun, causing the lawn to dry out.

6..Trendy kitchen re-do will increase my home's value Home trends come and go quickly. Instead of remodeling in the latest look, try repainting with trendy colors. If you do opt for a full remodel, choose elements with a timeless style, like wood floors & subway tile.

7..A contractor recommendation from a friend is good enough Look for a contractor as if it were a job interview. Before hiring, talk to a couple of sources, check the contractor's online reviews and ask a local building inspector which contractors meet code on the properties they inspect.



making the most OF A MODEST MESS HALL

While some people who are selling their home think a small kitchen is a negative, there are several ways you can make it stand out and appeal to potential buyers.

Light it up. Darkness can often make smaller rooms feel even more cramped. To open the room up to more light, consider removing all curtains from windows and instead install recessed blinds. You still get the privacy factor, while also allowing your kitchen to have a brighter feel.

Keep the counters tidy. Many people have things strewn about their kitchen counters and cabinets. Think about keeping your countertops clear of all items, including photos, papers and even appliances, to make it seem like the room is larger than it truly is.

Brighten the walls. Sellers should consider making the tone of the wall color in the kitchen brighter. Lighter colors tend to open up a room. They are also much more inviting, enticing potential buyers.

Mounted appliances. Sellers may want to consider mounting appliances on the wall or under the cabinets to create more countertop space, giving the kitchen the appearance of being more spacious. The distinctive and interesting design look could attract more interest during a walk through or tour.