

H **YOUR** HOME



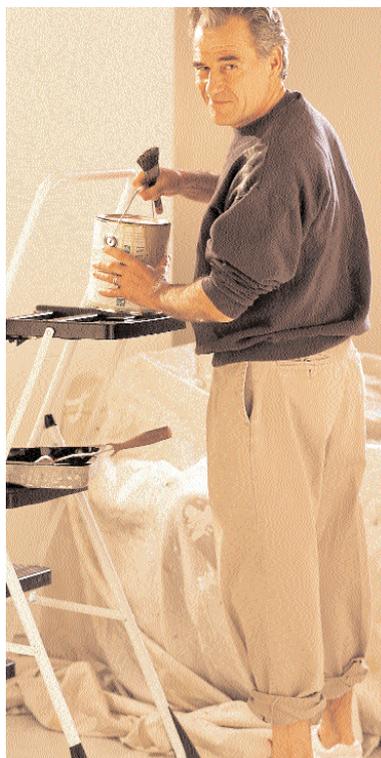
Preparing Your Home for Sale: Fix It!

Before placing your house on the market, make as many repairs and improvements as you can. It will be worth it. "New" and "just replaced" are the magic words to attract home buyers, according to Homestore.com.

Steam clean or replace carpet, fix loose door knobs and railings, make sure windows and doors open and close easily. Apply a fresh coat of paint where needed.

But you may find yourself deliberating over larger problems. Should you replace the crumbling driveway? Buy new kitchen appliances? Refinish the floors? Big repairs cost more time and money. You could simply disclose the problem and let the buyer deal with it.

On the other hand, the better condition your home is in, the wider the group it will appeal to. When making a decision of this kind, consider that repairing the problem could also result in a higher sale price. The best thing to do is start making these big repairs a year or two before you plan to move. Then you get to enjoy the results too! ■



Moving with Children

For America's youngest movers, moving to a new home can be an unsettling experience. The excitement of meeting new friends or decorating a new room is often outweighed by fears of losing touch with old friends or fitting in at a new school.

Here are some tips to help ease the anxiety children may feel when changing addresses, from Allied Van Lines:

- Include your children in decorating decisions for the new room.
- Assign your children a box to pack, or glassware to wrap, so they feel involved.



GREENER SPRING CLEANING

Ironically, spring cleaning can be hazardous to your family's health — and to the environment. Many common household cleaners contain alcohol, ammonia, bleach, formaldehyde and lye. Some of these ingredients have been linked with neurological, liver and kidney damage, asthma and cancer. Avoid them by making your own green cleaners. Here are some of Earth Share's recipes for simple, effective cleaners:

- Window cleaner: Add 2 ounces of vinegar to a quart of water in a spray bottle.
- Streak-free glass cleaner: Blend 2 ounces of vinegar, a spoonful of corn-

starch and a quart of warm water. Apply with a sponge and wipe dry.

- Rust remover: Use vinegar to remove rust and other mineral deposits on nuts and bolts.



Earth Share, a federation of America's leading nonprofit environmental and conservation charities, promotes environmental education and charitable giving in workplace employee campaigns. For more tips or to find out how your workplace can help the earth, visit www.earthshare.org or call 800.875.3863. ■

- Familiarize them with your new neighborhood, and locate some of your family's favorite restaurants and store chains. This will help your children feel more at home.
- Introduce yourself to your new neighbors before moving, and invite them and their children over to get acquainted. ■

TV's Great Leap Forward

By going digital, the TV is joining today's IT revolution. Digital TVs — not to be confused with digital cable or satellite — are improving picture quality for the first time since the birth of TV 50 years ago.

Digital TVs receive signals from a DVD or cable receiver and display them at five times the resolution of the standard TV. And in their most advanced form, they can display pictures up to 10 times sharper than standard TV.

The government has issued a mandate to the top 50 television markets requiring that they broadcast digital signals by the year 2006, but you may want to make the switch now. Digital TV offers more options — such as interactive features — and the same digital sound found in theatres and on DVDs today. Digital TVs start around \$2,500 now, but as they become standard, prices will drop. ■

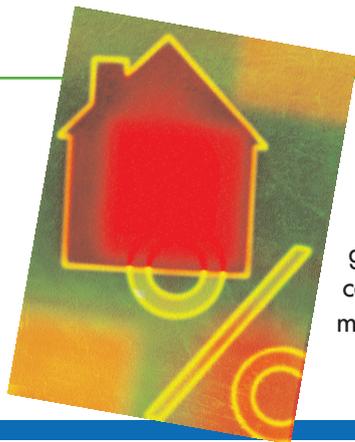
WHY A CRS IS BEST

Today, home buying and selling is faster, more complex and more competitive in every way. The goal of a Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is to make the process a little easier for you. A CRS has:

Experience — To earn the Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) Designation, every REALTOR® must have significant experience and volume of real estate transactions.

High Ethical Standards — Every CRS Designee is required to maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and to abide by its strict Code of Ethics.

A Focus on Home Buying and Selling — CRS Designees have a proven track record in the business, as well as advanced education in related areas like finance, technology and marketing. Choose a CRS, and work with the best in the business. ■



DID YOU KNOW?

Low mortgage interest rates are expected to sustain the housing market in 2003, according to the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

David Lereah, NAR's chief economist, said mortgage interest rates have moved lower than most forecasters expected. NAR estimates that more than 5.28 million homes will be sold in 2003. ■

Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? PLEASE MENTION MY NAME.

