

# Over the Fence

D P R Realty

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NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

*Ray is the way Real Estate gets done*

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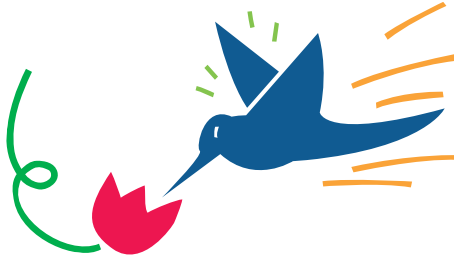


## A Perfect Time for Home Improvement!

July is a great time to evaluate home improvement needs overlooked during the winter. It is also an ideal time for do-it-yourself projects—whether you want to replace some windows, build a shed or refinish a deck. Here are some home improvement suggestions for July:

- **Check out your attic and crawl spaces.** In the attic, look for thin or missing insulation, animal nests or tunnels in the insulation, insect infestations, water stains, daylight showing through roof, and wiring damaged by rodents. In the crawlspace, look for standing water, wet or cracked foundation, signs of animal or insect pests, and dry rot in wood. A mask is advisable so as not to breathe in anything that may be hazardous to your health.
- **Evaluate your home's exterior paint.** If exterior paint is flaky, blistered, or rubbing off in spots, it will no longer protect siding from water damage and must be replaced. Be sure to fix any problems that could lead to dampness in the walls, and make sure the wall's vapor barrier is intact before painting.
- **Does your roof need replacing?** Consider roof replacement if you patched leaks over the winter, or if it is visibly worn and you are planning on selling your home within a year, as this is often one of the first things buyers try to negotiate.

- **Put screens in your windows and doorways**—to let in summer breezes and keep out pesky insects. Clean dusty screens using a vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment, or take them to a car wash and pressure wash them.



## Hummingbirds are Delightful Garden Visitors!

Visualize watching a bright green hummingbird in your garden moving from flower to flower in search of the tasty nectar within.

Hummingbirds can fly straight up, straight down, backwards, left, right, and even upside down. Most hummingbirds flap their wings about fifty times a second and have a very fast heartbeat and high body temperature. They feed every ten minutes or so throughout the day and typically consume two-thirds of their body weight in a single day. Their source of nutrition is primarily nectar from flowers, as well as sources of protein from insects and tiny spiders.

Though flowers are the natural means to attract hummingbirds to your garden, man-made feeders filled with a mixture of water and sugar (sucrose) are an essential alternative.

The formula for hummingbird feeders is 4 parts water (not distilled) to 1 part table sugar. Boil the mixture for one to two minutes, then cool and store in refrigerator. The mixture can be stored in

the refrigerator for up to one week. Do not use red food coloring, honey, or artificial sweeteners in your mixture, as this could be harmful to the hummingbirds.

By planting flowering shrubs and plants that are their favored food source, you can easily attract hummingbirds to become regular visitors to your garden.

*By: Lesley Dietschy*

## Summer A/C Cooling Tips

If your A/C isn't cooling this summer the way that it should, try a few of these "quick fixes" and save yourself time, money and headaches!

- Check the circuit breakers, fuses and plugs. Ensure that the circuit breakers are not tripped, or the fuses blown. Reset the circuit breakers if needed.
- Check the batteries in the thermostat and replace if needed.
- Set the thermostat on the air conditioner below room temperature.
- Ensure that the thermostat is set to the A/C setting, COOL.
- Clean and/or replace the filters to increase the airflow.
- Open the register(s) to let air flow into the room(s).
- Move any furniture that is blocking the register(s), or is near the register(s).
- Close the blinds to avoid direct sunlight entering the house.
- Use a fan to circulate the air.
- Limit cooking, baking and using the SELF-CLEANING oven setting.
- Ensure that the chimney damper is closed.

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**Repair, Replace, Relax** with Fidelity National Home Warranty (FNHW). A home warranty from FNHW provides both the home buyer and seller with “peace of mind” when it comes to repairs and/or replacement of a home’s major systems and appliances. FNHW prides themselves on superior customer service, including quick response time and efficient solutions for homeowners’ problems and needs. The homeowner only needs to make one call and pay one small service fee when a problem or a repair need arises.



*If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in the near future, please call for a personal interview and property assessment with no obligation.*



This is not intended as a solicitation if your property is currently listed with another agent. Fidelity National Home Warranty believes all information to be reliable, but assumes no legal responsibility for its accuracy.

## Expanding Your Home Outdoors

*With summer’s longer days and mild evenings, outdoor entertaining takes on a life of its own. A patio gives you the opportunity to create an outside living area—an extension of your home—for entertaining and relaxing all year round.*



By adding a barbecue grill, a built-in fridge and some quality outdoor furniture, the patio can, in itself, become a feature of your home.

It is important to remember that your new outdoor entertaining area does not need to be expensive. There are a variety of different patio surfaces to fit a particular style or budget, and patio shades need not be expensive, just enough to cover the main cooking and eating areas. After all, why block out the view of your gorgeous garden in the midday sun or the stars in the sky on a clear night?

Plants help to soften the hard surface of a patio floor by providing color, texture and fragrance and they set the mood for an outdoor living space. Further, you might also like to consider the use of a water feature and some soft low voltage lighting or candles, to create a stunning patio setting for night time entertaining.

Select furniture that is durable, basic in color and rich in style and sophistication. Consider resin coated wicker or rattan pieces that can be dressed up with different cushions and throw rugs.

Once your new outdoor space is complete, fire up the barbecue, invite the neighbors and celebrate!



### INDEPENDENCE DAY TRADITIONS

Fourth of July is a traditional time to celebrate! Communities abound with picnics, parades, fireworks and neighborhood block parties. The following menu will help get your festivities off to the right start and will feed groups of 12 to 20!

- Hamburgers/Cheeseburgers
- BBQ Ribs
- Hot Dogs
- BBQ Chicken
- Corn on the Cob
- Baked Beans
- Sliced Tomatoes
- Cole Slaw / Potato Salad
- Chips and Dip
- Pies (Cherry or Blueberry, but especially Apple)
- Ice Cream (any flavor-especially home made!)

