



## MAY 2015 MONTHLY REAL ESTATE NEWS

Brought to you by:

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## Are You Selling Your Home? Get My Free Guide

First impressions count. So if your home isn't looking its best, you could fail to get the best price for it.

Put that problem right by requesting the free report,

"Great Ideas for Quick, Easy

## Dear Reader,

April has been a very busy month, as it traditionally is. Sales were up by almost 14% and Dollar volume was up almost 12% from last year. I posted some statistics below with more details.

## Inside Your Newsletter this Month...

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## Your Home Buyers Now Look Beyond Bling to Basic

If you want to recoup your renovation dollars when you sell, be sure to repair that leaky roof before springing for a fabulous new kitchen. While a new kitchen may sound seductive, simply upgrading it is likely all you'll need to do to attract prospective buyers. Today's buyers are purchasing the basics, and they want them in good shape.

According to Barbara Pronin in a recent RIS Media's Housecall blog, there are eight home remodeling projects that will pay you back. Mind you, Pronin doesn't claim you'll recover your total investment, but she does suggest you'll recoup 80 percent or better, quite simply because "they increase the value of the property." Pronin lists the following as the key payback projects:

- New garage doors
- A wood deck
- Exterior siding
- Attic conversions

Fixes That Will Help Your Home Sell."

*Just reply to this email and I'll send it right out to you.*

## Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just reply to this email for the answer.

*What cult classic flick was first introduced in 1975?*

## Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please forward it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker by [clicking this link](#)

## Recipe: Grilled Asian-Inspired Tacos

### Serves 6

- 1 tablespoon sriracha sauce (optional)
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 1-pound beef sirloin steaks

- Kitchen updates
- New energy-efficient windows
- Basement remodel
- Backup power generator.

Kathy McCleary agrees. In HGTV's online Remodeling magazine, McCleary writes, "Basic maintenance, such as the roof and exterior painting, are frequently more important than an awesome kitchen." She quotes Sal Alfano, Remodeling's editorial director. "Buyers want to take the basic systems for granted...Maintenance can chew up a lot of cash quickly, and people are afraid of that."

Hot urban markets may be the exception. Says McCleary, "In the hottest housing markets, springing for a kitchen or bath remodel is a surefire investment, often returning more than 100 percent of the cost."

## Make BBQ Season Sizzle with These Grilling Tips

Grill masters, rejoice: Prime barbeque season is here! To make the most of your time behind the grill, consider the following hot tips:



- It's hard not to dive right into a steak fresh off the grill. But you and your guests will be rewarded for your patience. Tent steak (and other meats) with tinfoil and let rest for about 10 minutes. The meat's juices will distribute evenly, ensuring maximum flavor and texture.
- No thermometer? No problem. [EatingWell.com](#) has a hot trick for gauging the heat of a grill with your hand. Hover your open palm about thirteen centimeters (five in.) above the rack. If the fire is high, you'll likely need to move your hand within two seconds. If it's at medium, it will be about five seconds. If the heat's low, you'll probably want to move your hand at about ten seconds.
- When should you use direct heat and when should you use indirect? Elizabeth Karmel, a grill pro and author of *Taming the Flame*, gave *Better Homes and Garden* (BHG) this tip: if the food item requires less than twenty minutes to cook, use direct heat. If it takes longer, use indirect heat.

No one likes a dry kebab. Jamie Purviance, author of *Weber's Way to Grill: The Step-by-Step Guide to Expert Grilling*, told BHG to stack ingredients close together on the skewer to keep them juicier longer. But don't cram them.

Of course, grilling isn't only about the food; it's also about the outdoor experience. In a recent *National Post* story, landscape designer and builder David Veron recommended installing backyard elements that lend themselves to an activity, such as an outdoor pizza oven and an outdoor fireplace. The best part? They work just for summer. Drive enthusiasts can fire up the grill in the winter and

- 12 corn tortillas, warmed before serving
- 1/2 cup cilantro, roughly chopped
- 1 cup shredded Asian pear
- Lime wedges

In a medium bowl, whisk together the sriracha, ginger, brown sugar, vinegar, soy sauce, and oil. Pour into a large plastic zip bag with steaks. Marinate in the refrigerator for at least an hour and up to a day, turning occasionally.

Heat grill to medium-high. Brush grates with oil. Remove steaks from marinade and place on grill. Cook for 4-5 minutes on each side or until internal temperature reads 130-140 degrees for medium rare. Remove from grill and rest for 10 minutes.

Slice thinly. Divide among warmed tortillas and top with cilantro, shredded pear, and a squeeze of lime.

## Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

### What is the benefit of using a real estate agent?

According to recent research, more than 80 per cent of home buyers opt to purchase their properties through a real estate agent.

Yes, prospective buyers will screen homes and research

arent just for summer. Brave enthusiasts can fire up the grill in the winter and hang out-bundled up, of course-by the outdoor fireplace while they cook.

## April Statistics

April 2015  
Mid-Atlantic Region

### Sold Summary

	Apr 2015	Apr 2014	% Change
Sold Dollar Volume	\$3,957,101,769	\$3,539,900,648	11.79%
Avg Sold Price	\$369,823	\$376,786	-1.85%
Median Sold Price	\$300,000	\$305,000	-1.64%
Units Sold	10,700	9,395	13.89%
Avg Days on Market	75	70	7.14%
Avg List Price for Solds	\$376,300	\$383,278	-1.81%
Avg SP to OLP Ratio	95.8%	95.8%	-0.06%
Ratio of Avg SP to Avg OLP	95.5%	96.2%	0.31%
Attached Avg Sold Price	\$315,529	\$320,841	-1.66%
Detached Avg Sold Price	\$411,605	\$421,253	-2.29%
Attached Units Sold	4,650	4,153	11.97%
Detached Units Sold	6,049	5,240	15.44%

#### Notes:

- SP = Sold Price
- OLP = Original List Price
- LP = List Price (at time of sale)
- Garage/Parking Spaces are not included in Detached/Attached section totals.

### Inventory

	Apr 2015	Apr 2014	% Change
Active Listings	44,546	40,495	10.00%
New Listings	23,583	20,908	12.79%
New Under Contracts	7,587	6,866	10.50%
New Contingents	8,388	7,035	19.23%
New Pending	15,975	13,901	14.92%
All Pending	25,351	23,265	8.97%

### Financing (Sold)

Assumption	2
Cash	1,839
Conventional	5,116
FHA	2,209
Other	480
Owner	17
VA	1,037

### Days on Market (Sold)

0	437
1 to 10	2,897
11 to 20	1,272
21 to 30	828
31 to 60	1,402
61 to 90	781
91 to 120	707
121 to 180	1,062
181 to 360	1,073
361 to 720	204
721+	37

## Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

**How has the price of your home changed in today's market? How much are other homes in your neighborhood selling for?**

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house, I'll be able to help.

Just give my office a call for a no-fuss, professional evaluation.

I won't try to push you into listing with me or waste your time.

I'll just give you the honest facts about your home and its value.

And maybe I'll also give you the "inside scoop" on what's happening in the housing market near where you live!

Just give my office a call or reply to this email to arrange an appointment. Alternatively, stop by at the office.

## Easy and Affordable: "Going Green" at Home

Green living isn't limited to big projects like installing solar panels. There are simple and affordable ways to go green. The best part: Green living may also save money and make your home more comfortable. Here are three suggestions:

**Use green products:** All that seems "green" isn't necessarily so; "green labels" aren't regulated. So always check ingredients of cleaning products, paint, sealers, and even windows before buying. Many well-known manufacturers now offer green products (particularly house paint) with low or no volatile organic compounds

screen names and research neighborhoods online, but when it comes to viewings and negotiating, they'll turn to an agent. And for sellers, your agent is an expert on your neighborhood "solds" and will give you accurate 411 to price your home appropriately.

Real estate agents have extensive, ongoing training, belong to associations and boards, have a responsibility to adhere to strict standards, and provide strong negotiating skills. An agent has networks to tap for anything you may need as part of the buying or selling process.

But most important, real estate pros are there for you, helping you through one of the biggest financial investments you'll make.

products (particularly those paint) with low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Some VOCs can be damaging to human health.

**Reduce reuse recycle:** It's not just a slogan; there are lots of ways to make easy, everyday changes that can have an impact:

Wherever possible, purchase products and materials made from recycled materials.

Use reusables, such as washable cups and plates, instead of paper or foam, and washable rags instead of paper towels. Also reuse-don't toss-plastic containers, glass jars, and paper or plastic bags.

Add compostable leftovers from meals to a compost pile for richer soil and a reduction in food waste. But check what's compostable and what isn't. Try:

[Sustainable Baby Steps](#)

Find home products, like flooring, porch posts, countertops, cabinets, doors, and light fixtures at salvage yards and Habitat for Humanity ReStores.

**Insulate and energize:** Green homes are energy-efficient, and there are many energy savvy products available now to make your home green-many of which can be installed with tools you already have. Consider:

- Having boilers/furnaces professionally cleaned.
- Insulating water heaters and hot water pipes.
- Looking for Energy Star labels on appliances and electronics, such as TVs.
- Installing energy-efficient lighting and programmable thermostats.
- Checking attics and home exteriors for leaks and torn insulation.

**Know anyone interested in buying or selling a home?**

**I am happy to help and greatly appreciate referrals.**



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