

Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

Advantage Realty



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"The Hardest Working Broker on the East Bay."

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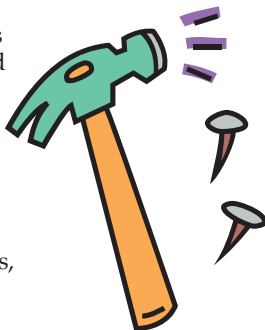
OCTOBER 2008

Fall Maintenance Tasks

Fall is here and simple wear and tear from weather and age occurs in every home. Check the overall condition of your home and prep for the coming winter months. It's wise to fix any problems before they lead to extensive and costly repairs.

Outside

- Replace weather stripping and caulking around windows and doors as needed.
- Fill cracks and holes in the house siding with caulk as needed.
- Remove window air conditioners or use a weatherproof cover.
- Clean and store removable screens.
- Drain outside faucets.
- Remove leaves from gutters and drain pipes.
- Repair leaky roofs as soon as possible.
- Check the flashing on vents, chimneys, and skylights.
- Check the chimney for damaged caps and loose mortar. Check the flue and damper. If needed, have the chimney professionally cleaned.



- Do maintenance on the hot water heater as specified by the manufacturer.
- Check faucets for leaks; replace the washers if necessary.
- Clean the refrigerator coils.
- Clean major appliances according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Check fire extinguishers. Review the instructions and replace as needed.

Furnace/Heat System Tip

Fall is a good time to check your furnace for proper operation. Turn your system to the heat function, just as you would when the weather becomes cold, and be sure it is heating properly. If you discover there is a problem, you can call a professional to address it before the cold weather arrives. If winter is upon you, and your furnace/heat system should go out, you might have to wait a few very cold days for a service person to arrive, as it will be one of the busiest times of the year for them.



What do you get when you take the circumference of your jack-o-lantern and divide it by its diameter?



Pumpkin Pi



Halloween Safety

- NEVER eat any treats until they are examined by an adult at your home.
- Carry a flashlight so drivers can see you and you can see hazards in the street as well as other people.
- Tie or sew glow-sticks to your child's costume so they can be seen more easily in the dark.
- Welcome trick-or-treaters with your porch lights and any exterior lights on.
- Candlelit jack-o-lanterns should be kept clear of doorsteps and landings.
- Consider using flashlights instead of candles to light jack-o-lanterns.
- Set a time limit for your children to "trick-or-treat." Also designate a specific route for them to take.

Pet Safety

- Don't leave your pet out in the yard on Halloween. There are plenty of stories of pranksters on this night.
- Trick-or-treat candies are not for pets. Chocolate is poisonous to a lot of animals. Tin foil and candy wrappers can be hazardous if swallowed.
- Be careful of pets around a lit pumpkin. Pets may knock it over and cause a fire. Curious kittens especially run the risk of getting burned.
- Don't dress the dog in costume unless you know he loves it. Otherwise, it puts a lot of stress on the animal.

Inside

- Test your smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector.
- Change the batteries in both. This should be done twice a year.
- Have the heating system serviced and change the furnace filters.



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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 itself 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. These materials contain information and articles obtained from third parties. FNHW does not endorse the recommendations of any third party nor guarantee the information provided is complete or correct.

October Home Decorating Tips

- Hollow out apples or mini pumpkins and use as votive candle holders. These are inexpensive and look really great. You can even carve or paint faces in them!
- Create creepy autumn centerpieces by filling vases with dried flowers, brown leaves, and empty branches. Tie a black ribbon bow around each centerpiece for more flair.
- Serve fresh veggies using a hollowed out pumpkin as a bowl. Cut off the top and clean out, leaving the top in a jagged edge design! Use mini pumpkins to hold dips!
- Ask your Halloween party guests to bring a carved pumpkin to the party. Set up a special table to display them on.

OCTOBER

Monday, October 13, Columbus Day is a Federal Holiday

October 31—Halloween

November 2—Daylight Savings Time Ends. Set clocks BACK one hour—Spring forward/Fall back.




SWEET AND SPICY PUMPKIN SEEDS

Spice them up by mixing:
 5 tablespoons sugar
 ¼ teaspoon coarse salt
 ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
 ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
 ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
 A pinch of cayenne pepper or to taste
 1½ tablespoons peanut oil.

ROASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS

To roast your pumpkin seeds, do not wash them first! Washing removes all the natural flavor. Instead, remove the seeds from the strings and place a single layer on a cookie sheet. Try to make an even layer. The less they lie on each other, the better they will bake.

Add salt to taste and bake at 250° until dry, stirring occasionally—usually about 15 to 30 minutes or until they start to turn a very light gold.

Prepare seeds as above, but line the cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a medium bowl combine 3 tablespoons of the sugar and the salt, cumin, cinnamon, ginger, and cayenne.

Heat peanut oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add pumpkin seeds (after baked) and 2 tablespoons sugar. Cook until sugar melts and the pumpkin seeds begin to caramelize, about 45 to 60 seconds.

Transfer to bowl with spices and stir well to coat. Let cool.