

BEAT THE HEAT!

Helpful Tips of the Month!

July 2016

Well, they are finally here...the dog days of summer. I always use this phrase, but have never really known what it meant. In honor of this month's Helpful Tips, I finally looked it up. According to the National Geographic Society's website, Ancient Greeks and Romans noted that when Sirius, the Dog Star, rose at nearly the same time as the sun, was the hottest time of the year. They referred to this time period as "dog days." Centuries later the phrase became incorporated into the English lexicon. There you go! This month's Helpful Trivia!

Since we are in the midst of these dog days, I thought it would be most helpful to share with you ways to beat the heat, protect yourself and loved ones from the heat, and save some money. I hope you enjoy this month's issue and, as always, thank you for your continued support of my business!

I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!

It's SURVEY TIME in Sweet Home Suburbia!

As I shared with you in my online newsletter this month, I want to hear from you on what you love most about the town you live in. **Email me your Top 5 list of favorite things about your community and you will be entered into a drawing to win a really awesome prize.** I can't say yet what the prize is, but it will be tailor-made to the winner! Your Top 5 lists **MUST be received no later than July 31st**. Some answers will appear in a future issue of Helpful Tips of the Month. I work with clients all over the Chicagoland area, so it is really beneficial to me to share with them what makes different communities great. Your input may bring an awesome buyer to your area! I can't wait to see your responses! Thanks!

Email your submissions to:

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Staying Cool & Saving Green

Summertime is when we tend to get that one electric bill in the mail that makes us go, "Holy Cow! What happened?!" Yep. It gets hot out, we crank up the air conditioning, and assume that's the main reason for the increase in our bill. There is some truth to that, but at the same time, there are lots of things we can do to keep our electric bill a little more balanced during the hot summer months. See how many of these tips you and your family can put into practice:

-Turn off the a/c at night. Most evenings, the temperature outside drops lower than the indoor temp. Put a fan in the window to draw the cooler air into your bedroom if there isn't a breeze.

- Turn off ceiling fans when you're not in the room. I just learned this tidbit on the energy.gov website. As the site says, "Fans cool people, not rooms."

- Eat more salads. The less cooking you do in the oven and on the stove, the cooler you and your home will be.

- Hang them out to dry. Dishwashers and clothing dryers produce quite a bit of heat. Stop the dishwasher before the drying cycle begins and let your clothes dry in the warm summer breeze.

- Adjust a/c settings throughout the day. Whether you're home or not during the day, try this trick I've been doing lately. Run the a/c in the morning and get it down to a nice cool temp (for me, that's 74 degrees). Turn the a/c off and make sure all the blinds and curtains are drawn. The home stays insulated, pets stay comfortable, and it stays temperate all day long. If it's a nice evening with a breeze when you get home, you can open all your windows, turn on a couple fans, and not have to turn the a/c back on. This could result in a huge savings!

- Lights out. This should really be a year round habit, but if you aren't in the room, why are the lights on? Only having lights on where you are reduces excess heat in your home and saves money.

- Hang out in the basement. If you're fortunate enough to have a usable basement in your home, make that your hangout space in the summer, or even as a place to sleep. Temps are going to be a lot cooler below grade.

There are lots of other ways to save on energy – such as energy efficient window coverings, as well as purchasing EnergyStar products – but, what I love about all of the above suggestions is they don't cause you a dime! Simply take the time to think about whether the a/c really needs to be cranked up all day, what other items in your home are either heat sources or simply costing you money, and make adjustments throughout the day. Result? No more electric bill shock! Happy Saving and Staying Cool!

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Stay Chilled Outside

Understandably, this is pretty hard to do during the hottest days of the summer, but when you have to be outside, these suggestions may keep you from overheating. Take a look:

Lightweight, light-colored clothing – Save the leggings, jeans, and black clothing for another time. Loose fitting tops, shorts, dresses, and pants, all in lighter colors and cotton, if possible, keep air circulating around you and through your clothes.

Ice Bottle at the ready – If you use plastic water bottles, fill a few and keep them in the freezer. Take one with you on walks and car rides. They'll stay cold longer, give you something to set on the inside of your wrists and other pressure points when you get hot, and of course, give you something to drink as the ice melts.

Washcloth ice bath – If you're entertaining outside on a hot day, pick up a bunch of washcloths from the dollar store, roll them up and individually tie them with string, and plunge them in a bucket of ice water. As people get warm, they can grab one to keep cool.

Stick to water – Caffeine and alcohol can increase dehydration, so make water your drink of choice.

Keep an eye on Fido – Make sure you don't neglect your furry best friend when you're outside! Dogs pant to keep themselves cool, but excessive panting can cause respiratory distress, according to PetMD. Save walk-time for early morning and after the sun has gone down. This will keep you cooler, too! Also, try to avoid asphalt pavements that can burn their paws, find shady spots to take a break, have water available for them, and, of course, never leave them in the car.

PAYING IT FORWARD is WORKING!!!

Congratulations to the OPRF High School Marching Band & the Oak Park-River Forest Historical Society! They are the latest recipients of Paying it Forward! My business thrives on the support of wonderful people like you who appreciate the service I offer with my business and, in turn, refer their friends, family, co-workers, and neighbors, to me for their real estate needs. As a reminder...

For every buyer or seller referral you send my way, once we close, I will make a \$100 donation in your name to the organization of your choice!



NEW LISTING! 1357 HIGHRIDGE PARKWAY, WESTCHESTER

Charming 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath Cape Cod on a large corner lot. Hardwood floors, eat-in kitchen, finished basement, 2.5 car garage, & covered patio!

NEW LISTING! 170 N. MARION, #12, OAK PARK

Spacious 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath duplex condo in the heart of downtown Oak Park. Large kitchen, separate dining area, in-unit laundry, balcony, 2 bedroom suites, private 2 car garage. Walk to everything location!



SOLD!!! 230 Park Avenue, River Forest

This delightful 3BR Cape Cod sold in 20 days for 96.8% of the list price!



SOLD!!! 7753 Van Buren, #317, Forest Park

This super 2BR condo sold in 11 days for 97.7% of the list price!

Market Watch

Dan Matas, Key Mortgage Services, 708-471-5612

30 year fixed: 3.44% 15 year fixed: 2.69%
FHA 30 year fixed: 3.25% 30 year Jumbo: 4.2%

BIG News of the Month! When was the last time you refinanced your home? We are still feeling some of the aftershocks of Brexit on interest rates, so if you're paying more interest than these numbers, give Dan a call!