

Sellers Need to Use Common Sense When Putting Their Homes on the Market

I show maybe 30 homes to buyers in a typical week, and all too often I show a home where some of the simplest steps have not been taken to make the home presentable to buyers.

For example, last Sunday I showed a "fix and flip" home — a property that was bought at a foreclosure auction by an investor and fixed up for sale. A lot of money was spent fixing up this home, including laying all new sod in the front yard. New carpeting was installed on both floors. New appliances were installed and even new kitchen countertops.

But the original screens on the windows were damaged from 15 years of sun exposure, and some were even ripped. They could have been rescreened at the local hardware store for \$15 each.

The deck boards were repainted,

but if you looked carefully, you could see that one of them was rotted. Looking under the deck, several of the joists were rotted, too. This will be an inspection issue anyway, so why not fix it now — for a couple hundred dollars?

Now and then I show a home which is itself "smoke free" but a month's worth of cigarette butts is on display in an ashtray on the front porch — what a first impression!

Another first impression is the front lawn. Even if you're unwilling to have Lawn Doctor do its magic to green up the lawn during the month prior to putting your home on the market, at least water the lawn for the month and pull the thistles!

It's okay to have a dog on the property, but can you please pick up the dog waste in the backyard?

I have shown half-million-dollar

homes with broken door closers on the front storm door — a \$20 repair.

I suppose we can't expect every homeowner to be this savvy, but the listing agent should be smart enough to get such things handled if for no other reason than so he or she has a chance of having a closing and earning a commission.

Not every listing agent or homeowner is willing to spend \$100 or more for a "staging" consultation, but every agent should at least be familiar the basics of staging, such as decluttering and removing everything from the refrigerator door. I share my limited wisdom on staging during my initial listing appointment. The seller and I are on the same team, after all, and both of us want to be successful in getting the home sold.

Toilet lids should be down, beds should be made, clothes should be off the floor. Google "staging homes" for more practical advice.

This Week's Featured Listing:

Price Reduced on Candlelight Valley Home

Not only has the price been reduced on this fabulous home at 14541 W. 56th Place, but the seller has made some major improvements, including new stainless steel kitchen appliances and a new concrete patio in the backyard. A big selling feature of this home, especially for us guys with big toys, is the 810-sq.-ft. detached garage/workshop, which is in addition to the 3-car attached garage. See the slideshow and take the narrated video tour on the website to fully appreciate this home and its many features. The Van Bibber open space park is behind the homes across the street.



REAL ESTATE TODAY



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