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Hello again valued clients!

After a slow winter for home sales, Canadian home prices appear to be increasing again.

Despite forecasts earlier from a number of economists for price growth in the Canadian home market to slow down, it has been doing the opposite.

Teranet, National Bank's house price index, which tracks 11 cities, hit an all-time high in April, with prices rising 0.5% from March and 4.9% from a year earlier.

Some cities watched house prices fall but Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Calgary experienced new highs in April.

However, economists at TD Canada Trust are still bearish, "We continue to believe that home price growth will moderate in the second half of 2014."

After 23 years in the business, one thing I have learned is that people buy houses no matter what economists say.

In gratitude,

Les Twarog

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THE BUSY REAL ESTATE SEASON IS HERE!

The busy spring/summer real estate season kicked off in April with a total of 3,050 residential property sales on the Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) in Greater Vancouver.

"We saw steady increases in home seller and buyer activity in April, which is typically the case in the spring months," said REBGV President Ray Harris. "People often look to buy or sell their home this time of year as the school year draws to a close and the summer holiday season is still a few months away."

New listings for detached, attached and apartment properties in Greater Vancouver totaled 5,950 in April, while the total number of properties listed for sale on the MLS® system in Greater Vancouver reached 15,515.

The MLS® Home Price Index composite benchmark price for all residential properties in Metro Vancouver came in at \$619,000. Harris noted, "Home prices in the region continue to show steady, yet

modest, increases when compared to last year."

Sales of detached properties rose 25.6 percent over last year to 1,336 in April 2014, while the benchmark price increased 4.7 percent from April 2013 to \$956,700.

Sales of apartment properties reached 1,172 in April 2014, an increase of 11.4 percent compared to April 2013, with a year-over-year increase of 2.6 percent in the benchmark price, reaching \$375,500.

Whether you're thinking of buying, selling, or simply wondering about the direction of the real estate market in your own area, please remember that you're always welcome to call for a no-obligation discussion.



VREB



SOCKET SCIENCE

Replacing your burnt-out lightbulbs has become a more confusing task of late, not just because of recent legislation that means some products will no longer be available, but because of the dizzying array of new products on store shelves. Below is a guide to help you find the right bulb for the job.

Lightbulb packaging is very informative – provided you know the lingo. Defined here are a few key terms:

- **Watts.** It may surprise some to learn that watts don't refer to a bulb's brightness, but to its energy use. The lower the watts, the less energy the bulb consumes, and the cheaper it is to use.
- **Lumens.** Lumens measure the amount of light output – the higher the lumens, the brighter the bulb. Being able to compare the lumens (brightness) of bulbs of the same wattage (energy consumption) is very handy for determining which bulb is more efficient.
- **Color Temperature.** Despite being measured in Kelvins (K), color temperature refers not to heat but to light appearance. At the bottom of the scale (2,700K to 3,000K) is "warm" or "soft" light, that yellowish glow we associate with traditional incandescents; in the middle of the scale (3,500K to 4,100K) is "cool" or "bright" light; and closer to the top of the scale (5,000K to 6,500K) is "daylight", that bluish light that's been a source of complaint for many CFL and LED lightbulb purchasers.
- **ENERGY STAR®.** Lightbulbs bearing the ENERGY STAR® logo have met strict, third-party tested and certified standards of energy efficiency; as a result, they use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs.
- **Halogen.** These bulbs are as close as you'll get to traditional incandescents. They look the same, offer comparable light quality, are dimmer-compatible, and produce light the same way. Unlike incandescents, they use halogen gas (which isn't hazardous), making them slightly more energy-efficient. Costing more and lasting longer than incandescents, halogens are a suitable choice for ambient, general lighting. Just don't touch their glass and be warned they get very hot.
- **CFL.** Compact fluorescent lightbulbs are a significant step up from halogens in terms of cost, energy efficiency, and lifespan. Their life is shortened by frequent on/off switching, though, so they're best used where they can be left on at length. Common complaints – the bluish hue, long warm-up time, and lack of dimmer-compatibility – are being addressed by manufacturers. Containing a small amount of mercury, CFLs require special cleanup and disposal methods.
- **LED.** Slightly more energy-efficient and significantly more costly than CFLs, light-emitting diode bulbs are much, much longer lasting, making them far and away the most cost-effective option. Unlike halogens and CFLs, however, LEDs are unidirectional, meaning they cast light in only one direction; as such, they're best used where bright, focused (or task) lighting is needed. While LEDs are dimmable, many bulbs are compatible only with certain dimmers.

As incandescent lightbulbs disappear from stores, let's look at the three basic types of bulbs you'll have to choose from for your indoor lighting needs:

BALANCING ACT

Buy before selling or sell before buying? That's the dilemma every homeowner must eventually face. The former choice is often the more problematic one for the following reasons.

- First and most obviously, you'll be saddled with two mortgages to pay. Few people can afford to carry that burden for even a short period of time. Even fewer can handle it indefinitely, which leads us to the next problem...
- The market could cool down. If there's a downturn after you buy your next home, and you still have a property to sell, you could be on the hook for two mortgages for weeks, or even months longer than you'd bargained for.
- Prices could drop. If they do, the property you still need to unload could sell for significantly less money than you'd anticipated or were counting on – an especially precarious position to be in when you've already purchased your next home.
- Buying before selling can weaken your position as a buyer. Given a choice, sellers typically would rather not deal with a buyer whose money is tied up in another property or whose offer is conditional upon first selling their home.
- Buying before selling can weaken your position as a seller. Unless you can afford to carry those two mortgages, you'll need to sell fast; under pressure of deadline, you may need to accept an offer you otherwise wouldn't consider.

Dealing with a home sale and a home purchase can be a difficult juggling act. For help keeping all the balls in the air, talk to your real estate representative and loan representative – they're there to discuss your options and figure out which make the most sense for you.



ON THE MOVE

Once you've settled on where to move, you'll need to decide how to move. Do it all yourself? Let movers take care of everything? Or a compromise between the two?

The DIY approach makes sense for those on a budget, or who like having control – some people just aren't comfortable entrusting other people with their belongings and prefer the process to be hands-on. On the other hand, moving by yourself is more disruptive, stressful, and time-consuming, and you risk sustaining (or exacerbating) an injury.

Having professionals handle your move is more expensive, but less disruptive, as packing won't drag on for months as it often does when we do it ourselves. It's significantly less time-consuming and stressful (though some would argue that last point), and your belongings may be safer, as movers have the best materials, equipment, and know-how for packing and transporting them.

What some people may not realize, though, is that "no service" and "full service" aren't the only options. Moving consists of packing, loading, driving, and unloading; you can distribute these tasks between you and moving professionals as needed. Take driving, for example: this is a particularly costly aspect of long-distance moves, so if you're going far, you can have movers load up your rental truck before taking the helm yourself. Do you have a lot of special items – particularly awkward or fragile ones? Then leave the packing to the pros. If you pay for nothing else, consider having movers do the loading and unloading – this is the really difficult, exhausting, and potentially injurious part of the move, so why not let somebody else do the heavy lifting?

Les' Lessons

Tips from The 90 Plus Study

According to one of the biggest studies in the world on aging led by Professor Claudia Kawas at UC Irvine:

1. Moderate amounts of coffee can help you live longer.
2. The same applies for alcohol, any kind, one or two drinks per day.
3. High blood pressure later in life can be a benefit.
4. People who were a little overweight in their 70's lived longer than underweight people did.
5. People who exercised lived longer than those that didn't exercise.
6. As little as 15 minutes per day makes a difference, with 45 minutes being the best. More is not better.
7. It's important to socialize regularly.

To learn more, go to: www.cbsnews.com/news/living-to-90-and-beyond

Vancouver Waterfront

3 Bedroom Luxury
2 Harbour Green
3,600+ sq ft
Sophisticated Living
3 Car Garage



West Vancouver

Awesome View Home
Ambleside Craftsman
3,000+ sq ft
5 Bed / 4 Bath
Includes a 2 Bedroom Suite



Richmond Farm

Great Investment Opportunity
9.28 Acre Blueberry Farm
3,600+ sq ft home
Close to Golf, Rec Centre
and Theatres



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