

# realityreport®

Compliments of Donna Reilly

Weichert, Realtors



**DONNA REILLY**  
Sales Representative

## Weichert, Realtors

350 Nassau Street  
Princeton, NJ 08540

Office: 609-921-1900  
Cell: 609-462-3737  
DonnaReilly@weichert.com  
www.DonnaReilly.com

Greetings! You're receiving this newsletter with hopes that you find it informative and entertaining.

If you're thinking of making a move, or are just curious as to real estate trends in your area, please feel free to call at any time. It's always good to hear from you!

All the best,

*Donna Reilly*



Cell: (609) 462.3737 • Home: (609) 860.8498  
DonnaReilly@weichert.com • www.DonnaReilly.com

## As One Door Closes, Another One Opens

In 2010, 37.5 million people changed residences in the U.S. Of these, an estimated 43.7 percent of the movers cited housing-related reasons, such as the desire to live in a new or better home or apartment.

For the smoothest move, it makes sense to plan as far ahead as possible, right down to the moving day itself.

Most moving days go by in a blur, especially if the buying and selling transactions are scheduled for the same day. There's a flurry of activity, from exchanging papers between real estate lawyers, banks releasing funds, registering mortgages, insurance policies coming into effect, picking up keys, disconnecting and connecting utilities – and, by the way, moving all your stuff!

Your real estate sales representative can help you prepare for the mammoth undertaking of moving day by making sure you're aware of

the many activities, small and large, that need to be coordinated.

It's important to be on top of all the vital points, from figuring out where the moving truck is allowed to park in front of your home, to knowing that the lawyers cannot give you the keys to your new home until they have received the funds and registered title to the home. As a client, you'll receive the benefit of your real estate sales representative's experience in anticipating any possible delays, and preparing yourself with backup plans.

Smooth the way for your next property transaction by calling for more information today.





# Say “Ahhhhh...”

AS LIFE GROWS INCREASINGLY STRESSFUL, PEOPLE ARE INCREASINGLY VIEWING THEIR HOMES AS RETREATS — AND DECORATING THEM AS SUCH. BATHROOMS ARE OFTEN A PRIMARY FOCUS, AND THE TREND TODAY IS TO DESIGN A SPACE DEVOTED TO RELAXING AND REJUVENATING. BELOW ARE TIPS TO HELP YOU CREATE A SPA-INSPIRED BATHROOM. YOU WON'T BE THE ONLY ONE WHO'LL APPRECIATE THE RESULTS — SPA-LIKE BATHROOMS ARE A TURN-ON FOR HOMEBUYERS.

- **Paint.** Color helps establish a room's atmosphere and affects our moods. Activating hues — reds, oranges and yellows — are not what you want in your home spa. Opt instead for earth tones and cool shades: soft blues, greens and purples, as well as taupes. Such passive colors are most calming to our senses.
- **Heated flooring.** Stepping on cold tile first thing in the morning or after a bath isn't very comfortable. Your bathroom is a great place for a splurge, as it's a relatively small area to cover, making the luxury of heated floors more affordable here than it would be in almost any other room in your home.
- **Whirlpool tubs** are a spa-bathroom staple, but not always an option. Luckily, you can turn almost any standard tub into a whirlpool with relatively inexpensive accessories like spa bath mats, which sit on the bottom of the tub and produce bubbles, and bubble jet massagers, which attach inside the tub with suction cups.
- **Towel warmers.** Choose from stand-alone racks you simply plug in, wall-mounted racks that integrate into your home's wiring, or — the height of extravagance — warming drawers that integrate seamlessly into your cabinetry. They're great for keeping your towels from getting musty, and for drying delicates.
- **A new showerhead.** Swap out your standard model for one that mimics the sensation of rain or a waterfall, one that's handheld with massage settings, or even one with LED lights. But why settle for one showerhead? Multiple wall-mounted heads that spray water at you from the side are a luxurious option.
- **Ambient lighting.** While you need task lighting in your bathroom so that you can take care of personal grooming, mood lighting is essential for establishing a spa-like atmosphere. A dimmer switch will do the trick, as will a decorative table lamp on your vanity, and (aromatherapy) candles strewn about the room.
- **Soothing sounds.** With portable MP3 players, it's easier than ever to soak away the day's stresses to the tranquil tracks of your favorite light jazz, classical, or sounds-of-nature playlist. Or, forego the music and outfit your home spa with a decorative tabletop fountain so you can listen to the pacifying babble of water.
- **The little touches.** Soft, high-quality towels to pamper the skin; some greenery (go for bamboo in rocks for a Zen look); an anti-fog mirror; a bathtub caddy — the kind that has a book support and beverage holder. It's often these little touches that go the longest way toward making you feel indulged.



## Table Talk

Negotiating the purchase agreement is arguably the most challenging aspect of buying a home, particularly in markets that favor sellers. To strengthen your position at the negotiating table, consider the following advice.

- Come to the table having already been pre-approved for a mortgage. A buyer who's pre-approved is one with leverage, and creates a greater chance of a faster and smoother transaction. The seller won't have to wait long for you to obtain financing, nor worry that the deal will fall through altogether because you didn't qualify for financing.
- Selling your current home before buying a new one has its advantages. Do so and you'll be in a position to make a cleaner offer to sellers — that is, an offer not conditional upon having to first sell your home. And in sellers' eyes, a buyer who can make such a contingency-free offer is more attractive than one who can't.
- Work with a real estate sales representative. At the negotiating table, information is power — and your real estate sales representative is armed with all the information you need to come out on top, such as the selling prices of comparable homes. Also, checking your emotions at the door is key to a successful negotiation, and your representative can help you do just that.
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Make sure you have options, other properties you'd just as happily bid on — again, something a real estate sales representative can help you with — so you don't find yourself suffering from "the one" syndrome and desperate at the negotiating table. In other words, be ready to walk away.

## SHOW READY

How you live in your home when it's on the market is different from how you normally live in it. If you're serious about selling, you need to be prepared for buyers' eyes at all times. Consider following these tips to keep your home in show-ready condition.

- Don't smoke indoors or cook food with strong odors. Take out the trash every morning. Keep your home smelling good with essential oil diffusers or light-bulb rings.
- Make some rooms "off limits" for your own family until your home sells. If you can avoid using your dining room, formal living room, guest room or spare bathrooms, for example, you'll have less cleaning to do.
- Consider hiring a cleaning service before listing your home, perhaps on an ongoing basis until it sells. All you'll have to do is light maintenance after they leave or between professional cleanings.
- Keep a storage container, basket or bag handy. When you get last-minute calls for showings, throw everything that's not in its designated place into your "clutter catch-all," and then stow it out of sight.
- Stash disposable cleaning wipes under your kitchen and bathroom sinks so you can quickly wipe down all the surfaces in those rooms when you're done in them with just one product.
- Keep small containers in bathrooms to house toiletries when not in use and hide them in the vanity. Have two sets of towels: one for displaying, another for daily use (kept hidden).
- Showings aren't likely to happen early in the morning or after about 8 p.m., so take advantage of these times to take care of chores like dishes, dusting, vacuuming and tidying.



# STOP LOSS

Air leaks make your house a less comfortable place to live and a more expensive place to maintain. Here's how to spot leaks so that you can remedy them, and prevent money from floating out your windows.

- Some leaks can be detected by sight. Tour your house, inside and out, paying particular attention to areas where different materials join (e.g., drywall and trim, pipe and brick); if you see gaps, you have leaks. You can also look for light, either with a flashlight while someone watches the other side of the wall, or by looking for sunlight.
- Go hands-on. Try rattling closed windows and doors — if they move, you've found an entry point for air. This next tip works best when the air outside is cool: Dampen your hand, then run it around the edges of doors, windows, skylights, electrical outlets, plumbing vents, etc.; if you feel cool air on your hand, you've identified a leak.
- Conduct an air pressure test when it's breezy out. Draw air into the house by closing all windows and doors, as well as your damper; turn off all heating and cooling components and turn on all exhaust fans. Using a lit candle or incense stick, inspect all those areas where air might enter — where the flame or smoke wavers, there's a leak.
- If you like gadgets, pick up a thermal leak detector. They use infrared sensors to measure baseline temperatures in your home; when the sensors detect a variance in temperature, the device's indicator light changes color. Expect to pay somewhere in the neighborhood of \$30 to \$50 for your thermal leak detector.



## Terminology Tip

**Title Search** — An examination of the chain of title to property as indicated in public records, in order to confirm ownership of the subject property, and to verify that there are no liens or other claims against the property other than those scheduled to be erased at closing if conducted for a purchase. A title search verifies that all former owners have formally given up their rights to the property.

The information and opinions contained in this newsletter are obtained from sources believed to be reliable, but their accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The publishers assume no responsibility for errors and omissions or for any damages resulting from the use of the published information. This newsletter is provided with the understanding that it does not render legal, accounting, or other professional advice. Not intended to solicit properties or businesses listed for sale and agency agreements in place with other real estate brokers. Whole or partial reproduction of this newsletter is forbidden without the written permission of the publisher. © Market Connections Inc.® 2011, Phone: (800) 387-6058.

## Compliments of Donna Reilly

Weichert, Realtors



**DONNA REILLY**  
Sales Representative

*Please don't forget to visit my website [www.DonnaReilly.com](http://www.DonnaReilly.com). Here you will find valuable and timely real estate information, including up-to-the minute West Windsor neighborhood market updates. I hope you find this website helpful, and would welcome any suggestions or comments you may have. Please feel free to call me any time at 609-462-3737, or send me an email at [DonnaReilly@weichert.com](mailto:DonnaReilly@weichert.com). It will be my pleasure to be of service to you.*

**Office:**  
609-921-1900

**Cell:**  
609-462-3737

**Website:**  
[www.DonnaReilly.com](http://www.DonnaReilly.com)