

APRIL 2022



# REAL TALK

The Monthly Newsletter of Welcome Home Team

## SPRING CLEANING? GET PREPPED

The birds are chirping, the flowers are blooming, and the weather is warming. Spring is finally here!

The thought of deep cleaning your entire home can be daunting, which is why most people avoid the task altogether. However, we've all heard the saying "proper planning prevents poor performance," which holds true when it comes to spring cleaning. To kickstart tackling all your spring projects, here's a preparation checklist to help get you started on the right foot.

### Buy Your Favorite Cleaning Products

You won't be excited to embark on your cleaning extravaganza with a five-year-old bottle of windex and half empty bleach. So head to the store and stock up on all your favorite essentials.

### Make Appointments in Advance

Planning to get your carpets professionally cleaned or hardwood floors refinished? Just be sure to schedule your appointments ahead of time as to not interfere with your personal cleaning agenda.

### Create an Upbeat Playlist

Spring cleaning should not be liberating for just your home, it should also be a cathartic experience for yourself. Let decluttering feel good! Create a playlist of your favorite songs to keep you motivated and on task.

### Replace Your Linens

After months of dark and dreary weather, brighten up your home with fresh linens. Replace heavy curtains, blankets, and comforters with a lightweight alternative and your home will feel cleaner immediately.

### Trash It or Give It Away

Haven't worn it in six months? Haven't cooked with it for over a year? Get rid of it! Even better, donate it! Take some advice from decluttering expert Marie Kondo and toss away items that no longer "spark joy" in your life.

Keep in mind, a thorough spring cleaning will likely take more than a day, or even an entire weekend, which is why putting everything in writing is the only way to help keep you on task. Remember, it is okay to start small. Busy work week? Overbooked mom? Commit to completing three tasks every day and by the end of the month, your house will shine like brand new.



F U N F A C T

Before electricity, homes were lit using whale oil or kerosene heated with wood or coal resulting in a layer of soot and grime after those long winter months. By spring, homeowners were ready to open their windows, let in some fresh air, and rid their houses of layers of filth.

# 2022 BATHROOM TRENDS



Looking to transform your bathroom into a stylish, yet peaceful retreat? Check out these popular bathroom trends that will make all the difference.

## Integrated Technology

Smart toilets, touchless faucets, heated floors, and steam-sensing exhaust fans, you name it... Technology continues to be integrated into bathroom designs for more comfort and efficiency.

## Circular Style

Say farewell to the rectangle. One of the most popular bathroom mirror shapes, the circle is serene and interesting at the same time. There's something undeniably modern about this form, but there's a softness there as well.

## Backlit Mirrors & Medicine Cabinets

This feature offers ambient lighting without added glare or reflections on the mirror and can double as a nightlight when dimmed. This effect can be used to create a focal point or highlight textured wall surfaces behind the fixture.

## Multi-purpose Storage

Better-functioning spaces is leading many to rethink existing layouts in their home, with access to storage a key motivator for this change. Over the next few years, bathroom layouts will be opening up to include dressing areas, closets, and laundry rooms.

If you're thinking of making some new additions to your bathroom, or wanting to make some valuable upgrades before you put your home on the market, consider these rising trends!

## Love It OR Hate It: Popcorn Ceilings

Just like glitter, popcorn ceilings were all the rage in the 1970s. But, just like glitter, it actually started sometime in the 1920-1930's to create a barrier for sound. Also called "acoustic ceilings," they are better at absorbing sound and muffling noise. They grew in popularity with home builders and drywall finishers as a way to save time, money, and easily cover blemishes.

Beyond the asbestos used in the early years of this ceiling treatments, haters tend to mention the highly porous, lumpy surfaces which catch dust and cobwebs that can easily discolor over time. Their crater-like surfaces also tend to cast harsh shadows which makes rooms appear smaller.

Feelings about ceilings and how they should look are definitely a mixed bag. Should they fade into the background? Stand out? Be bright or neutral? Be 'textured' like popcorn? Do you have any feelings? Or are you on Team I-Don't-Care-It's-Just-The-Ceiling?



## Nebraska mortgage and refinance rates today (APR)

**5.375%** 30-year fixed   **4.375%** 15-year fixed   **4.125%** 5/1 Adjusted Rate Mortgage (ARM)

## Real Estate Snapshot Omaha/Lincoln Metro Area



Active Listings

**1,118**

Median List Price

**\$289,631**

Listings Under Contract

**1,310**

Median Sold Price

**\$293,357**

Total Closings

**1,164**

Days on Market **16**



## KEEP OR DUMP THAT OLD CAR?

When you're on a fixed income or you're saving aggressively for retirement, you try to hang onto your car for as long as possible. That's especially true right now because prices for new and used cars are sky-high. Plus, everyone is trying to fend off the effects of inflation.

If you've been trying to decide whether it's worth it to keep spending to extend the life of your car, Consumer Reports (<https://bit.ly/3MYZZcc>) has some answers.

In addition to insight into keeping your old car running for a while longer, its tool, Care Repair Assistant (<https://bit.ly/3MRXJ6R>), calculates your repair costs. You type in your car model, year, zip code, and the repair needed, and the site estimates how much parts and labor would cost in a given zip code.

Also, see <https://bit.ly/3iaZwpp> to get a sense of what your car is worth and how to make the most money when you sell it.

## OLDER PHONES MAY STOP WORKING WITH 5G

If you own an older cellphone with 3G or a Kindle, be aware that in 2022 some of your electronics will stop working because of a 5G upgrade. And many mobile carriers plan to replace their 3G networks with 5G.

Once the phase-out happens, some older phones will stop working, meaning you won't be able to make or receive calls. Some of your medical and security devices could be affected too. Since there's no fix for phones that only work on 3G, you'll need an upgraded device.

AT&T's retirement of 3G was scheduled in February, and the rest of the major carriers plan to do so in the coming months.

Get in touch with your carrier for advice, shop for a new phone, and see if there are any special deals.

For more information about the changeover to 5G and what it means to you, see:

- AARP – <https://bit.ly/3q7OA0c>
- AT&T – <https://bit.ly/3MSzcym>
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – <https://bit.ly/3libkRp>
- PC Mag – <https://bit.ly/3MZPkxZ>
- T-mobile – <https://t-mo.co/3whtv7c>
- Verizon – <https://vz.to/3Jm0I52>