

ISSUE

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Rapid City Real Estate Update

Happy New Year!



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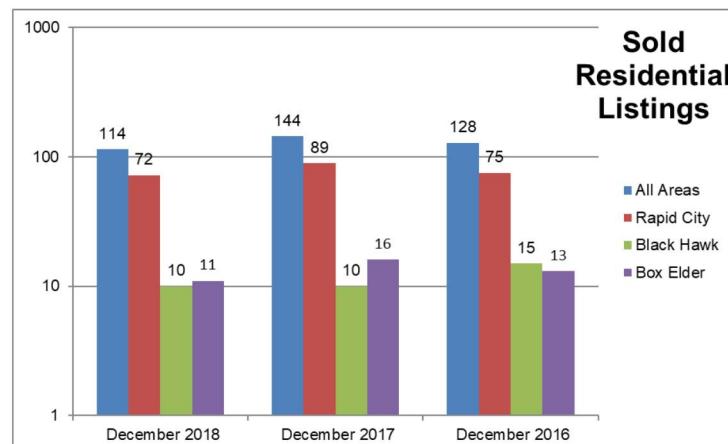
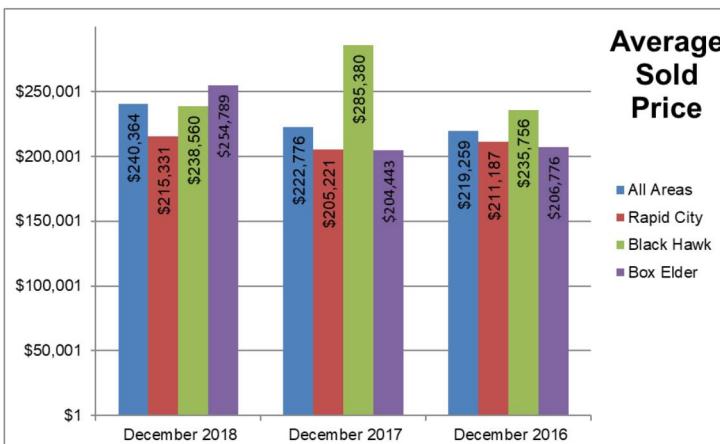
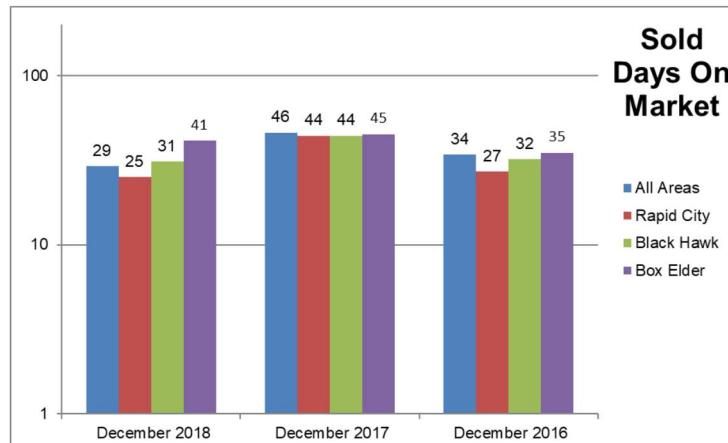
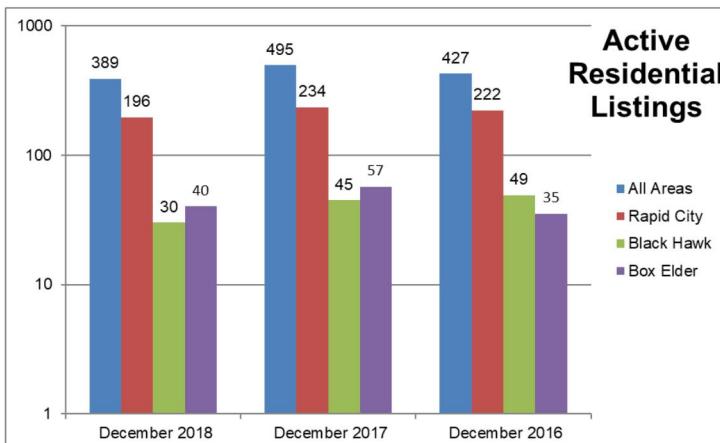
LEWIS-KIRKEBY-HALL
REAL ESTATE, INC.

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Rapid City & Area Market Conditions For December 2018



Should You Buy A Home Warranty?

"We're buying a house. Should we buy a home warranty?" Seems like a relatively tame question, right? But post it on Facebook or Nextdoor and watch the impassioned responses roll in. You might as well ask, "What political party should I belong to."

Who knew people were so fervent about home warranties! Everyone has their own experience; expect to hear a few people call them "a scam" or at the very least a waste of money. Others will regale you with their tale of how having a warranty saved them from a freeing winter because they couldn't afford to fix their furnace without it.

In the end, the decision is personal and largely based on how comfortable you are coming out of pocket if one of the more expensive items in your home, like the air conditioning unit or hot water heater, should malfunction and need to be replaced. We're breaking down three important particulars so you can make an education decision.

Know the cost

"A basic home warranty costs about \$350 to \$500 a year or more," said Money Talks News. "A warranty typically covers kitchen appliances, plumbing, water heater, heating and electrical system components, sump pump, whirlpool tub, and ceiling and exhaust fans, according to Angie's List. "Enhanced" plans, purchased for another \$100 to \$300, provide added coverage for such things as a washer and dryer, air conditioning system, refrigerator and garage door opener. Optional coverage can be added, including for pools and septic systems."

You can typically break down the annual cost into monthly payments if that's more comfortable for you, but the cost of the warranty itself isn't the only thing you're responsible for paying. Service calls will typically also cost you; put in a work order for a broken microwave or a tub that won't drain and you'll be responsible for paying for the privilege of having a professional come check it out, and—hopefully—fix it.

"Home warranty deductible, or service call fees, is an important concept to master if you want to understand how to find the cheapest home warranty plans for your needs," said Review Home Warranties. With most home warranties, a deductible or service call fee will be required, "with an industry

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The Power Of Staging Your Home To Sell

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Often times the smallest changes can enhance a home's "showability" when it is offered to the public for inspection. Sellers don't seem to realize when "too much of their home" is showing. Staging your home for its finest presentation requires a room by room critique to offer the best first impressions.

Accentuate the Positive

When studying a room, the first point your eye catches should be a positive one. For example, a home with a massive fireplace commands the first attention spot. However, poor placement of furniture, too many "comfy" afghans and plenty of books and magazines will distort the simplicity of the rooms greatest asset. Add last night's empty pizza box and full ashtrays and any prospective buyer will less appreciate the fine points the home would have offered.

Here is a list of ten points to keep in mind when staging your home for buyer inspections:

1. Start packing the belongings you absolutely do not need to "live." Extra books, magazines, kids artwork, afghans that don't match the decor should be boxed and labeled for your next home. Extra knick-knacks from Christmas, cluttered bulletin boards and several months bank statements can easily be stored away. Kitchens are the biggest culprits as they are such a busy meeting place in the home. Discount coupons, excessive decorative magnets, photos, etc. really catch the eye of the overwhelmed buyer. The top of the refrigerator is the largest collector of sometimes used gadgets. Unless you use your "wok" daily, it is better to clear the top and the front of your refrigerator to make the kitchen a little simpler. Convenient appliances also do better when tucked away so counters look cleaner and sharper. Please check switchplates for fingerprints and smudges, as those are the first places to get noticed. Doorbells are another place that fingerprints are evident. Be sure you are making the right first impression.
2. Family rooms are for relaxing, and need to be staged for crisp impressions and not your lazy evenings! Fold up grandma's afghans, get rid of tired pillows, and pack up slippers, and cribbage sets for neat and clean appearances. Leftover smolderings in the fireplace can add a stale scent to the room. Give extra attention to removing ashes to avoid the less appreciated smokey smells from last nights fire.
3. Bedrooms are other places we enjoy our conveniences the most. Having our robes and slippers waiting for us does not offer top exposure to a viewing family. Get closets slimmed down for a generous look. Freshen with a soft potpourri to diminish the stale odors that come with humidity and small confined places. Although we like our shades and blinds pulled for sleeping hours generally all buyers are drawn to a light, airy and bright room, so open up all window treatments to maximize brightness. With windows being exposed, be sure they are really clean and sparkling. A house really shows its best when it looks like it has been cared for. Remove jewelry and other small personal items from dresser tops. Clean and simple sells the best.
4. The most inexpensive way to brighten a home besides a fresh coat of paint is to increase the wattage in light bulbs. That small guest room may be seldom used,
- but needs to look bigger and brighter to an interested buyer. Be sure the lamp can handle a stronger bulb and invest in a 3-way if possible. When you know that a showing is scheduled be sure to turn on every light bulb in the house for the best showing potential. Look around model homes, you will notice all the lights are always on, even on sunny days! This is not the time to conserve electricity - it's part of your marketing plan. If you have a room that shows particularly dark, put in an interesting lamp and leave it on most of the time. It will help the buyer leave with a brighter impression of the rest of the home.
5. Everybody has a "junk" room or closet. It's acceptable not to be perfect throughout, but minimize the clutter to one room, desk, or area and you are ensured of a better showing. If it is impossible to move around you could be adversely affecting that buyer's perception of the size of the home, so give careful consideration to overstuffed rooms.
6. Everyone's basement and garages are relatively the same, full of seasonal equipment, holiday decorations and tools. Garage sales are the best remedy for liquidating extras that you have accumulated over the years. Better to sell than to pay to have incidentals moved you really don't need anymore. The biggest offender in basement commentary is the strong mold odors from high humidity. A dehumidifier can assist greatly in relieving that damp "basement" feeling and can alleviate concerns of water problems that don't exist. It's worth the effort to alleviate this common problem.
7. The worst offenders for dust and dirt are the cold air returns and heating vents. If they won't clean up with soap and water and painting doesn't improve them either, purchasing new ones is not that expensive and a great alternative. A house with cobwebs and loaded vents really gives the wrong impression about the cleaning standards of the present owner.
8. Pet dishes of water and food should be relocated to a spot where they will not get kicked accidentally. Water provides the perfect setting for falls or slips that can cause an accident. Cat boxes and pet beds should be clean and fresh and out of sight if possible. Those that don't appreciate pets as much as you, will be turned off to pet "evidence."
9. Junior's bedroom posters of rock groups minimize the true picture of the room. Limit the "artwork" to 1 or 2 posters and promise him that he can resurrect the rest at his next destination.
10. Bathroom grouts must look like new. Bleaching can take care of some of the problems, but it's worth the money to have a professional tile person patch and regROUT problem areas. This is not a good time to try extensive grouting yourself. Often times amateur attempts convey the problem more than it is. Shower tracks from doors should glisten, along with the mirrors. Remove prescription bottles, pills, old toothbrushes, and worn towels. This room should get the most attention and look its best at all times. Dated colors in sinks can be replaced for generally a low investment and can render a much-updated feeling when a yes-teryear color is no longer an objection. Remove old moldy shower curtains and limit shampoos to a few.

*Written by Saul Klein
Courtesy of Realty Times*

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Ways To Increase Your Storage Space

Between the studs . . . Put the space between studs to work by tucking open display shelves into walls. To keep things looking tidy, add doors on the front. Or use piano hinges to mount artwork so it can swing open to reveal hidden storage space. You can even recess narrow drawers into the space.

Nothing wasted, something gained . . . Use space that otherwise would be wasted. Under the stairs is a perfect example. For smaller budgets, add a door to the side and use it like a crawl space. Finish the space with shelves and hooks. For those who have more cash, each riser can house a drawer. It is a more expensive project because you're working with the structure of the stairs, she says.

If you have a staircase that's open underneath, turn that unused space into a home office by tucking a

desk and some cubbies, shelves or file cabinets underneath.

No monsters under the bed . . . Use baskets or zippered plastic storage bags to use under the bed. Or buy a bed with drawers built in. Another option is a mattress that lifts up on hinges to make under-bed storage more accessible.

Put the space beside the fridge or between the washer and dryer to good use by building narrow shelves on wheels.

Build a headboard that includes storage space, add a long floating shelf above the headboard or use rows of floating shelves above bedside tables to create extra display space.

Courtesy of *Realty Times*

average of approximately \$75 per visit. Some companies, like American Home Shield or TotalProtect Home Warranty, let their customers choose the amount of a deductible, which depends on the amount of premium. The higher the premium, the lower the deductible."

Consider your peace of mind

Many homeowners opt for a home warranty for major "just-in-case" scenarios. Just in the case the air conditioning unit crashes and burns. Just in case the hot water heater dies. Just in case there's some other expensive repair that pops up, without the ability to comfortably pay for it. With the cost of some of these items running into the thousands—the average for a new air conditioning unit and installation, per HomeAdvisor, is \$5,413!—the peace of mind factor is huge.

"For a homeowner who doesn't have an emergency fund or who wants to protect their emergency fund, a home warranty can act as a buffer," said Investopedia. "Home warranties also make sense for people who aren't handy or who don't want to worry about tracking down a contractor when they have a problem. Warranties can also make sense for people with expensive taste in appliances."

But...understand that not everything is covered

There's always a chance that the item you need repaired is not covered under your warranty for one reason or another. "Having a home warranty doesn't mean the homeowner will never have to spend a penny on home repairs," said Investopedia. "Some problems won't be covered by the warranty, whether because the homeowner didn't purchase coverage for that item or because the warranty company doesn't offer coverage for that item. Also, home warranties usually don't cover components that haven't been properly maintained. Furthermore, if the warranty company denies a claim, the homeowner will still have to pay the service fee and will also be responsible for repair costs."

In our case, limitations spelled out in our home warranty contract regarding the replacement of outdated parts and refrigerant costs for our broken air conditioning unit meant we had to come out of pocket for \$1,500. The lesson here: Read the fine print so you're prepared.

*Written by Jaymi Naciri
Courtesy of *Realty Times**

Tips For Creating A Luxe Bedroom

Creating a relaxing, romantic retreat of a bedroom is the goal, but it's not as easy as just loading the furniture in and making the bed. Many people find that even with beautiful pieces and great space, their bedroom is still lacking that something special. A few tips and the right mix can make you feel more serene, help you sleep better, and even make you feel more amorous in your private sanctuary.

Get the lighting right

You don't want to feel like you're being interrogated in the bedroom. Super bright lights don't set the mood, nor are they useful for helping you to relax. But, you may need bright lights for function if you don't have a space that gets a lot of natural light. The answer: a dimmer. Reading lights you can place on nightstands are also key for adding function and style without blasting the whole room with light.

Choose the right color

Fire-engine red walls will create energy, which could be helpful to your love life, but might keep you up at night for all the wrong reasons, too. Use the principles of Feng Shui to choose colors that will help "bring the best energy into your space," said MyDomaine. According to certified Feng Shui expert Laura Cerrano, earth tones, beige, and cream are "ideal for someone looking to create a restful bedroom," while colors like blue, blue-green, and black "can translate into a deeper connection between you and your partner."

Indulge in a luxurious headboard

A headboard isn't just a finishing touch to the room. It's an essential part of the space that gives it a well-put-together, finished look and that also make the bed feel plush. "An attractive headboard

will really make a statement in your bedroom and transform the space," said Houzz. "It will also make your bed a much more comfortable place to be. When choosing a headboard, think about the size of your room and the height of the ceiling to get the proportions right. If you have a really high ceiling, you can afford to scale the headboard accordingly to create a real impact."

Pick cushy sheets

There's just no reason to live with scratchy sheets. High thread counts matter, and they can get expensive. But the weave and fabric of the sheets can also help them to feel more - or less - comfortable. Business Insider's exhaustive test of the best sheets came out with a clear winner: "After reviewing dozens of contenders, our top pick for bed sheets are the 280-thread-count Pima Cotton Percale Sheets from L.L. Bean," they said. "Crisp, cool, and comfortable against your skin, these sheets make bedtime a treat."

Add texture

Creating any stylish space is about layering, and the bedroom is no different. Start with the bed. "Don't be that person with just a top sheet," said Elle Décor. "Okay, we know you'd never commit that cardinal design sin, but in our opinion, layering is key to a beautiful bed. Throws, bed runners, the works! It will give your space an instantly glamorous upgrade, plus you'll be beyond cozy in the wintertime."

Wallpaper or a feature wall behind the bed and accessories like cushions and decorative items sprinkled throughout the room can add another layer of interest.

*By Jaymi Naciri
Courtesy of *Realty Times**

Black Hills Events

Rapid City Rush Games

January 16, 18 & 19
February 8, 9, 20, 22 & 23
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center

Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo

January 25 - February 2
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center

Black Hills Sports Show & Outdoor Expo

February 8 - 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center

Heroes Skate Day

January 19 - 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM
Main Street Square, Rapid City

Mineral, Fossil & Rock ID Day

January 26 - 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Museum of Geology

Last Day To Skate

February 23 - 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Main Street Square, Rapid City

Annual Deadwood SnoCross Showdown

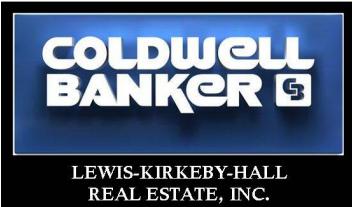
January 25 - 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Days of 76 Rodeo Grounds, Deadwood

Skates & A Movie

January 26 - 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM
February 16 - 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Main Street Square, Rapid City

Information provided by:

www.visitrapidcity.com
& www.downtownrapidcity.com



2700 W Main Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
605.343.2700 ph
605.342.2247 fax
www.coldwellbankerrapid.com



Courtesy of:

Ron Sasso
Broker Associate
(605) 593-3759
ron.sasso1@gmail.com



Coldwell Banker Lewis-Kirkeby-Hall volunteered at Feeding South Dakota by filling sacks full of food items. Feeding South Dakota is such an amazing

