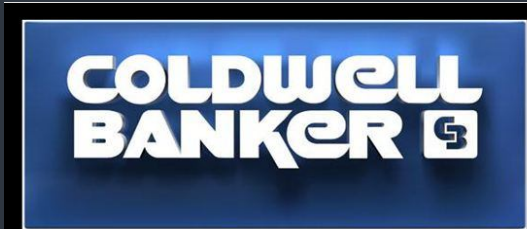


Rapid City Real Estate Update



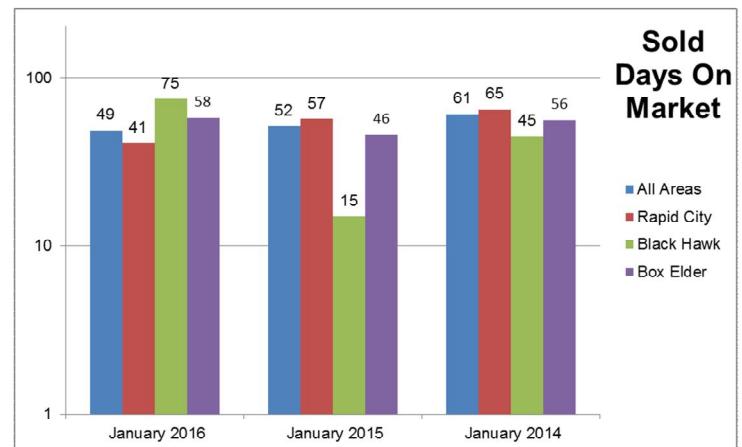
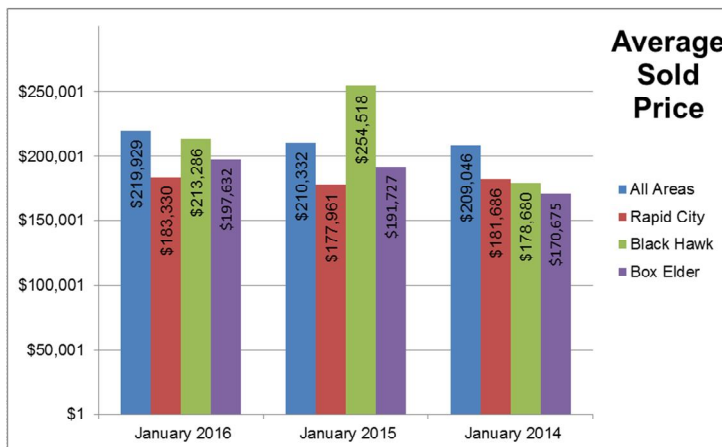
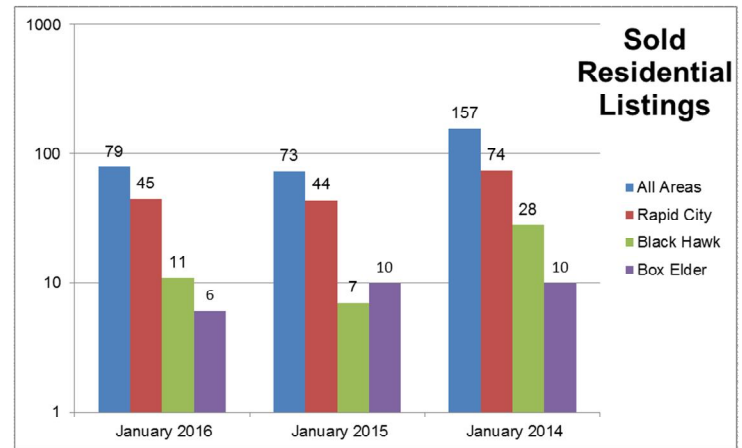
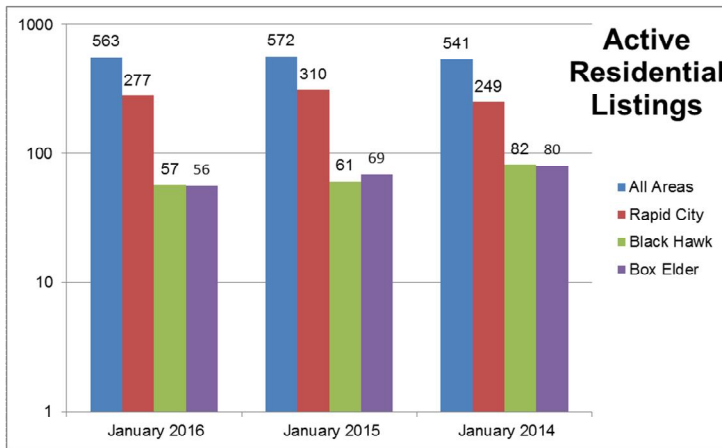
LEWIS-KIRKEBY-HALL
REAL ESTATE, INC.

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Rapid City & Area Market Conditions For January 2016



10 Inexpensive Ways To Improve Your Home Security

Keeping your home and family safe is a priority we all share. But beyond locking the doors and getting a home alarm, there are numerous steps we can take to protect who—and what—we love, and it doesn't have to break the bank.

1. Change your locks

Did you change your locks when you moved into your new home? Yeah. Neither did we. That means someone might already have the most important thing they need to get into your home: a key.

2. Upgrade your door security

While you're changing your locks, look for those that give you more secure options. If you're not sure how important this is, consider what Family handyman reports about FBI burglary statistics: "65 percent of break-ins occur by forcing in the front, back or garage service door."

3. Remove that extra key

The FBI also reports that 12 percent of break-ins are caused by thieves simply finding your hidden key. If you have one sitting under your welcome mat or in a planter, it's time to remove it.

4. Use timers

"Put interior lights, TVs, and radios on timers so that you can create the illusion that someone is home when they're not," said Bob Vila. "Modern digital light timers offer a key benefit over traditional models by having lights cycle on and off randomly."

Make sure to include motion detector lights in key spots around the exterior of your home. A light that pops on just as a burglar is approaching your back door may be enough to make him back away from your home. Home automation products make all of this easier than since you can control lights, TVs, and other items via Smartphone. (continued on page 3)



3 Key Pre-Offer Home Seller Actions



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Sellers who wait until they're faced with a buyer's offer to purchase before initiating three key actions, may be forcing themselves to make too many decisions at once and too quickly. Most of us are nervous about decision making. Many lack confidence in their ability. Yet, sellers will be faced with quickly making multiple financial, legal, and lifestyle decisions when a buyer's offer is presented to them.

There are 3 key positive actions sellers should begin before offers arrive, so that they are prepared for decision making and are less overwhelmed by the selling process:

#1. Start thinking that you're living in the buyer's new home. Mentally move out. Let go of "mine." Cut the emotional cord. Concentrate on making the property as attractive to buyers as possible and practical. If you wait to start this "cut the emotional cord to home" thinking when your real estate professional presents you with an offer, you're doing yourself a tremendous disservice. Making confident decisions is difficult when you're distracted by pride of ownership and personal history.

#2. Start thinking about what the buyer may ask you to do. Anticipate buyer requests regarding financing, moving dates, and other factors that may cause inconvenience or cost to you, the seller. For instance, if you had to wait many months for closing and the money from the sale, what problems could that cause you? Conversely, consider costs attached to moving in less than a month or at least sooner than convenient. Do you understand possible costs and considerations if buyers ask you to hold a second mortgage to enable them to pay the top dollar you ask for? Ask your real estate professional to explain how seller-held mortgages work and what would have to be true for you to sell that mortgage and realize cash.

#3. Start thinking beyond list price to achieve full offer value. The value expressed in a buyer's offer to purchase involves 5 key elements - it's a financial package:

Purchase Price is not automatically the amount the seller receives since other factors, like unpaid property taxes, can reduce the total. It's not the purchase price, but the net proceeds of the sale that sellers should concentrate on. Real estate professionals can calculate, or at least estimate, the seller's net proceeds after costs related to the offer and deduction of commission.

Closing Date, or the day ownership is transferred and the seller receives the money, can represent cost or value to sellers. If the seller has to make two moves or has to pay two mortgages during the transition from one home to another, costs can add up and offer value goes down. Inclusions and Exclusions represent costs and value. Appliances, light fixtures, and draperies are common seller inclusions, but the cost of replacing them in the next home reduces profit.

Terms and Conditions are clauses in the offer which cover "what if" risks and the obligations of both parties. These clauses detail what the buyer asks the seller to do for the purchase price. The degree of uncertainty attached to the conditions and the buyer's related ability to close effect the value of an offer.

Intent and Sincerity are vital aspects of an offer although difficult to quantify. For the seller, offer value lies in the certainty that the buyer will close in spite of market shifts and other problems ahead.

Weeks or months may pass from the time that you decide to sell and the day your real estate professional receives an offer to present to you. This key stage of selling your home is no time to discover:

- what you didn't understand about selling
- what you haven't considered thoroughly
- which details comprise your ideal outcome.

Discussing strategies and contingencies with your listing salesperson ahead of offer presentation will help the professional negotiate a solid high-value Agreement with the buyer. Mentally preparing yourself, and anyone else who has a say in what happens to the property, means no one will be pressured into snap decisions or miss opportunities under the tight timelines common with offers. Real estate professionals are trained to help sellers make decisions in their own best interest by providing necessary context and details, but these professionals cannot advise sellers exactly what to do, nor make decisions for them.

To gain full benefit from the knowledge and experience of the real estate professional who lists your real estate, let them fully prepare you for offer presentations in advance. When an offer comes in (usually at a very inconvenient time), you'll feel as confident and prepared as possible faced with this life-changing opportunity. You will understand which decisions to make and how to evaluate the full offer.

*Written by PJ Wade
Courtesy of Realty Times*

Quick HVAC Maintenance Tips and Tricks For Winter

Your HVAC system works overtime during the winter, so it's important to take preventative maintenance measures to keep it running smoothly. Here are some tips to help you prevent outages and keep your HVAC system in top shape for the season:

How to Maintain Your HVAC

Avoid wasting money on various HVAC repairs and take these preventative steps to keep your system in order:

- Check vents and ducts for any debris or dust that may prevent hot air from moving into your rooms.
- Have a heating professional perform routine maintenance on a schedule.
- See how your thermostat is performing and increase efficiency by turning it down to 55 degrees at night.
- Inspect air filters to ensure they aren't clogged and interfering with regular airflow.

Potential Issues to Look For

Keep an eye out for potential issues when inspecting your HVAC system:

- Unexpectedly high energy bills. If you're spending a lot of money on heating bills despite regular maintenance, you may need to address air leaks within your home.
- Unusually dirty or dusty air filters. If your air filters are getting dirty after only one month of use, look for holes in vents and the ducts, as

well as any external issues that may be affecting the system.

- Low levels of airflow from your ducts and vents. If you're seeing low airflow after cleaning your ducts and vents, you may have a bigger problem on your hands. Check for holes and breaks.
- A particularly cold room in your well heated home. With the heat on, every room in your house should be warm. If one room is cold, there may be leaks or holes in your insulation.
- Dented or collapsed ducts. These can cause many of the problems mentioned above. Make sure you fix them immediately to avoid more issues.

Benefits of HVAC Maintenance

When you invest in maintenance, you reap many financial and other long-term benefits, including:

- Ensuring a safe and comfortable home
- Keeping your warranty intact
- Reducing your energy bills in the winter

Conclusion

Don't delay regular maintenance on your HVAC system. If you don't perform maintenance in the fall, it's imperative that you do it before the next big winter storm. Do it yourself or hire a heating technician to do it for you. Just make sure that it's done regularly and effectively to ensure that you and your family will remain safe and warm through the winter.

*Written by Andrea Davis
Courtesy of Realty Times*

(continued from page 2)

5. Get a dog

Seriously. Homes with dogs are less likely to be broken into, according to a study by The University of North Carolina, because they bark to create a ruckus and can also harm an intruder by biting.

6. Fake the alarm

If you can't swing the cost of an alarm, pretend you have one. "Thieves look for an easy mark; making your home look tough to crack will encourage them to move on," said HGTV. "You can easily put up security system decals - a clear deterrent - even if you don't have a system."

7. Install a camera

"Thanks to relatively inexpensive DIY systems, you can install a security camera outside (or inside) that lets burglars know you're watching their every move," said HGTV. A variety of cameras are offered, and you can pick one up for under \$100.

8. Check doors and windows

You might think your home is more secure than it is. Maybe that backdoor is easy to open with a good push or the guest room window isn't shutting all the way. Eliminating easy access points by shutting doors and windows and locking everything up will cost you nothing, but if you need a backup for that easy-access slider door, a good old broomstick cut down to size will do the trick.

9. Call the police

In many areas, a police officer will visit your home to give you tips on how to make your home more secure, and it will cost you nothing.

10. Eliminate hiding spots

"If your shrubbery is too tall, bushy, or not well spaced, you're providing a nice hiding spot for a potential burglar," said Consumer Reports. "Trim and prune plantings."

*Written by Jaymi Naciri
Courtesy of Realty Times*



Garages: Not Just For Cars Anymore

With larger, more luxurious kitchens now the heart of many houses, and first-floor laundry and mud rooms the new activity centers, it was only a matter of time before the garage also underwent a transformation.

Despite the fact that 82 percent of homes have garages, the space is often "the largest, most underutilized, most abused, and most often ignored room in the house," wrote Bill West in his book, *Your Garagenous Zone*.

Many people still struggle to find enough space amid the junk in their garage to park a car. But there's a growing desire to create cleaner, more organized spaces that can contribute to a home's "wow" factor, says West. It may not raise the price in most markets, but it helps win a beauty contest if the buyer is deciding among a few homes.

Courtesy of Realty Times

Black Hills Events

Black Hills Sports Show & Outdoor Expo

February 12 - 14
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center

Rapid City Rush Games

February 12, 19, 20 & 21
Ice Arena, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center

February Heart Night

February 11 - 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM
SCAC, Rapid City

Valentine McGillicuddy's Valentine Dance

February 13 - 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
The Journey Museum

2nd Annual Valentines Masquerade Ball

February 13 - 9:00 PM
445 Martini Lounge
445 Mt Rushmore Road, Rapid City

Last Day To Skate Beach Party

February 27
Main Street Square, Rapid City

10th Annual Outhouse Races & 1st Annual Chili Cook-Off Contest

February 27 - 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
The Guest Ranch, Nemo

2016 Black Hills Home Builders Association Home Show

March 11 - 13
Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City

Information provided by:

www.visitrapidcity.com
& www.downtownrapidcity.com

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TO THE TEAM!**

