

Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

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Simple...Savvy...Service...

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AUGUST 2011



August is a Good Time to Assess Energy Use

ENERGY STAR guidance on home improvement projects enhances energy efficiency, lowers utility bills, and increases comfort.

Getting a handle on your home's energy use is an important first step to improving efficiency. You can do a simple assessment yourself using our online tools, or have a professional energy auditor perform a more thorough audit. Then, use ENERGY STAR resources to get guidance on home improvement projects to enhance energy efficiency, lower utility bills, and increase comfort.

Start with the Home Energy Yardstick

If you have five minutes and your last 12 months of utility bills, use the Home Energy Yardstick to compare your home's energy use to similar homes across the country and see how your home measures up. Then, use the Home Energy Advisor to get recommendations for energy-saving home improvements for typical homes in your area.

Visit: https://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=HOME_ENERGY_YARDSTICK.showGetStarted

Home Safety Electrical Inspection

Provided to you by Portland General Electric.

Is your home safe? Print out this checklist and do this inspection and see for yourself what might need fixing.



Home Safe Checklist	True	Needs Fixing
Electric outlets are not overloaded with lots of plugs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric cords are in good condition.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric cords do not run under rugs or furniture legs or near hot appliances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric appliances are used away from water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A multipurpose fire extinguisher is kept in the house.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All danger and warning signs are read and carefully followed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric appliances that can get hot—such as heaters, toasters, and light bulbs—are kept away from things that can burn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety caps are inserted in outlets when small children are around.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small appliances are turned off and/or unplugged when people leave home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All extension cords, lights, and appliances used outdoors are labeled for outdoor use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Simplify Your Life

What does it really mean to SIMPLIFY? Do you have to give up all of your worldly possessions and move to a bark hut in the woods? Hardly! Simplifying is all about having enough without having too much—cutting back on unnecessary spending, slowing down, and FOCUSING on your true priorities.

Some Practical Organizing Tips

- 1. Take a look at your life.** Where do you see EXCESS around you? Is your life cluttered with things you don't need or use? Is your schedule so full that you have no free time for yourself? These are a few good places to begin purging and simplifying.
- 2. Simplify ONE area of your life**—your job, your home, your spending—at a time. If you do too much at once, you will just get overwhelmed. Tackle the biggest thorn in your side first, then move on to the next biggest pain in the neck.
- 3. Make a list of small CHANGES** that you can immediately put into place. If you want less stuff, clean a few things out of your junk closet. Then, you can consider bigger changes, like getting down to one car or moving to a smaller house.



For full article and more tips including DIY solutions for all aspects of your life, visit: <http://www.onlineorganizing.com/CalendarHoliday.asp?holiday=27>

AUGUST

August 1–7: Simplify Your Life Week
 August 22–26: Safe at Home Week



Realty World - Providence Properties
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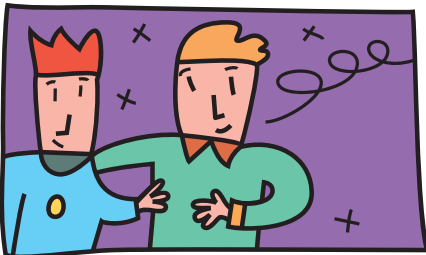
Repair, Replace, Relax with Fidelity National Home Warranty (FNHW). A home warranty from FNHW provides both the home buyer and seller with “peace of mind” when it comes to repairs and/or replacement of a home’s major systems and appliances. FNHW prides itself on superior customer service, including quick response time and efficient solutions for homeowners’ problems and needs.



If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in the near future, please call for a personal interview and property assessment with no obligation.



This is not intended as a solicitation if your property is currently listed with another agent. These materials contain information and articles obtained from third parties. FNHW does not endorse the recommendations of any third party nor guarantee the information provided is complete or correct.



Back to School: 2011

Summertime is winding down and vacations are coming to an end, signaling that back-to-school time is near. Parents and children alike scan the newspapers and websites looking for sales of school supplies and clothing. This edition of *Facts for Features* highlights the many statistics associated with the return to classrooms by our nation's students and teachers.

\$7.2 billion: The amount of money spent at family clothing stores in August 2009.

56 million: The projected number of students to be enrolled in the nation's elementary through high schools (grades K-12) this fall.

19.1 million: The projected number of students enrolled in the nation's colleges and universities this fall. This is up from 13.8 million 20 years ago.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Public Information Office, PIO@census.gov, Last Revised: May 24, 2011, http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb10-ff14.html

SIMPLE APPLE CHICKEN STIR FRY—READY IN 15 MINUTES

Ingredients

- 1 pound cubed boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1/2 cup onion, vertically sliced
- 1-3/4 cups carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1-1/2 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, crushed
- 1 cup fresh or frozen Chinese pea pods
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 medium baking apple, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 cups cooked brown rice

Directions

1. Stir-fry cubed chicken breast in 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in nonstick skillet until lightly browned and cooked. Remove from skillet.
2. Stir-fry onion, carrots and basil in 1-1/2 teaspoon vegetable oil in same skillet until carrots are tender. Stir in pea pods and water. Stir-fry 2 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and stir in apple. Add to chicken.
4. Serve hot over cooked rice.

Courtesy of allrecipes.com



Make everything as simple as possible, but not simpler. —Albert Einstein