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REAL ESTATE NEWS

Protecting Your Home from Critters



Wild animals are currently looking for warm spaces to call home for the winter months and unfortunately our homes can be an attractive target. When animals get into a home, the damage can be severe and

costly to fix but fortunately, with some careful planning you can ensure that you are not welcoming some unwanted guests over the winter months. Take some time to inspect your property to ensure that you are not providing easy access.

Mice

Mice are the most common animal to have in your home. Their small size and ability to squeeze through the tiniest of spaces make them hard to prevent. You will want to search the exterior of your home for any possible entry points. Look for cracks in the foundation or walls and seal anything that is any larger than a quarter of an inch. Also, check your window and door seals. If you have mice in your home, the most common sign is their droppings which look like dark brown grains of rice. Mice can cause a lot of damage by eating insulation and wiring so if you believe that you have a problem, it is important that you deal with right away; you will want to eliminate food sources, set traps, and try to find their entry point to seal it up.

Rats

Rats are becoming more and more prevalent in Ottawa and are a growing concern. Like mice, they can squeeze through small spaces and can be incredibly damaging in your home. As rats are considered a public health issue, it is important to report all sightings to the city as they may choose to put poison in your sewers or take action if they feel it is a neighbourhood problem. Unfortunately, if they are on your property, it is your responsibility to take care of the issue. The type of rat currently

being found in Ottawa tends to live in the ground but will access your home, especially at night, if it provides them with a food or water source. If you have rats in your home, determine how they are entering, set traps, and eliminate food and water sources. To keep rats away from the exterior of your home, it is very important to secure all garbage properly and dump standing water after all rainfalls.

Raccoons

Raccoons are highly intelligent trouble makers. They come out at night and can often be seen roaming the neighbourhood looking for food. At this time of year, raccoons are looking for a warm place to hibernate for the winter and attics are their favourite spots. Ensure that all aspects of your roof are in good shape (shingles, vents, soffits, chimney, and fascia) as any fault can provide them with easy access. It is also important to ensure that all trees are cut away from your home as they can help provide these animals access to the roof. If you suspect that a raccoon has taken up residence in your home, it is important to call in a professional right away to deal with it; raccoons carry many diseases that are dangerous to both you and your pets.

Taking Care of an Animal Problem

Depending on the type of animal and the scale of the problem, it is completely reasonable to deal with some pest issues on your own. Make sure that you understand the city bylaws for the types of traps you can set and where and remember, it is forbidden to relocate a healthy animal of any type. For larger infestations, larger animals, or ongoing problems it is advisable to hire a professional pest control company. Look for companies with a strong reputation and great references. Some offer guarantees and will return at no additional cost to you if the problem persists which may also provide you with some peace of mind.

“Your referrals are important to me. I value your support and trust.”



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Fall Market Springs Forward

Members of the Ottawa Real Estate Board (OREB) sold 1,549 residential properties in September 2019 compared with 1,386 in September 2018, an increase of 11.8 %. “Despite a challenging year of historically low inventory, September’s sales continue to be extremely strong, the likes of which we haven’t seen in the past 15 years” acknowledges OREB’s President. “It’s quite amazing, with the limited supply, that the market is still moving well with purchasers finding properties that meet their requirements,” he adds. The average sale price of a residential-class property sold in September in the Ottawa area was \$487,438, an increase of 8 % over September 2018. The average sale price for a condominium-class property was \$309,373 an increase of 9 % from September 2018. “Now that condominium prices have recovered, we see condo sellers jumping back into the market to take advantage of that, and as a result, condo sales have been very robust and have again led the way in September’s unit sales,” OREB’s President suggests. “September to November typically tend to be busy listing and sales months; however, there is a federal election coming up, which normally brings a slowdown in the market. We haven’t seen that transpire this year, which suggests that consumers are highly confident in our local economy and the Ottawa real estate market.”



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How to Spot a Rental Scam

A typical rental scam, fraudsters will entice you with a very attractive listing in a sought after area, great amenities and low price. Ads will be posted on popular sites like Kijiji, Craigslist or Facebook. They pose as the landlord and may claim to be abroad and unable to meet in person to show you inside the place.

After a few emails or text messages, they will pressure you to sign a lease immediately by saying there are other people also interested in the property. Then they will start demanding money. First a security deposit by e-transfer, then another month’s rent in exchange for a discount.

Here’s what you can do to avoid being scammed:

- Never deal in cash
- Rent is below current market rates
- Never rent without having a look at the actual place
- Meet your landlord in person at the property
- Don’t communicate only by email or text
- Always sign a written lease
- Make sure your lease identifies the owner of the property
- Avoid sub-leasing
- Do your research on the property
- Know your rights as a tenant
- Enlist the help of a Real Estate professional

If you’ve been the victim of a rental scam, or if you have information about this type of scam, report it to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (1-888-495-8501), the RCMP or your local police.