



NEWS RELEASE

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Selling This Fall? Local Broker Offers Tips for Receiving Top Dollar

OCT. 20 — As home-selling activity enters its typical seasonal lull this fall, it's especially important for sellers to make their homes look their best to ensure a timely sale and ultimately garner the top dollar possible, according to Brett Furman, Broker and Owner of the RE/MAX Franchise Network.

The overall outlook for the year has been good, said Furman, who is based in St. Davids. Indeed, the National Association of Realtors says existing-home sales are projected to easily set a record of about 6.49 million in 2004, well above the previous record of 6.10 million last year.

In keeping with the national statistics, the local market has also been extremely strong in 2003 and has remained strong for the first half of 2004. According to Trend Multiple Listing Service (MLS), the average sale price of homes in 2003 was \$289,700 in Chester County, \$227,600 in Montgomery County and \$231,400 in Delaware County. The number of total units sold in these counties were 2136, 2244, 1997 respectively. In 2004, the average sale price and number of units sold has been on the increase and is projected to continue growing through the second half of the year.

Although the numbers show a steady increase, after the busy spring and summer months, fall sales traditionally decline, making it potentially more difficult for sellers to sell quickly and at a competitive price.

"Thankfully, there are a number of easy steps a seller can take to attract house shoppers and ultimately land a buyer," Furman said.

Some of these steps include:

- Creating great curb appeal. First impressions are everything when it comes to selling your house. "When potential buyers see your house from the street, you want them to say 'wow,'" said Furman. With fall here, it's vital that the roof is in good condition and the exterior paint is holding up well. When it comes to the landscape, you should make sure the lawn is mowed and is not buried beneath a smattering of fall leaves.
- Trim trees so unexpected winds don't knock down branches.
- If it is rainy, a good doormat is needed so potential homebuyers can wipe their feet and not traipse mud and water through the house.
- Clear your gutters.
- Make sure your heating unit is in working order.

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- Make the house warm and cozy. Entering a cold house could leave an unfavorable impression. Make sure the thermostat is at a comfortable temperature. Hang a festive fall wreath on your door.
- Adorn your dining room table with a fall centerpiece and decorate the house with festive fall embellishments and bright orange pumpkins.
- Let the light in. Open blinds and curtains so plenty of light illuminates the home's interior.

And regardless of what time of year it is, two things that can cause prospective buyers to turn a thumbs-down are dingy walls and shabby or unattractive carpet. Fresh paint can do wonders. Keep the colors neutral. And while you can offer buyers a carpet allowance to compensate for bad carpet, replacing it before selling really boosts that first impression and makes the house more appealing and worth more in the buyer's mind.

Finally, clear the clutter. Put extra furniture in storage. Clear counters and clean closets.

"The key is to make sure your systems are properly maintained, your house's exterior is attractive and the potential buyer feels welcome and 'at home' once inside the house," Furman said.

About The Furman Results Team

Brett Furman leads a team of five sales partners and four support staff, who are focused on customer service and satisfaction.

The Team offers an "Easy Exit" option – a modern "gentleman's agreement" that allows customers to sever their contract with the team at any time in the home sale or purchase process.

The Furman Results Team sold 86 homes in 2003 and is on track to close over \$26,000,000 in 2004. (The average Realtor sells 14 houses per year.)

The Team offers the manual, "Everything You Need To Know About Selling Your Home." The guidebook can be obtained at no charge by calling (toll-free) 1-888-324-4052 Ext. 234.

For more information about residential real estate trends in the Delaware Valley, contact Furman at 610/687-2900, ext. 107 and visit www.homesofpa.com.

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Note: An electronic picture of Mr. Brett Furman is attached.