RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

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Outdoor living has become a coveted feature for many homeowners and those looking to buy.

IN 2026, landscape architecture has shifted from something that is purely ornamental to features that are functional and resilient. The American Society of Landscape Architects says a professionally designed landscape can increase a home's value by anywhere from 15 to 20 percent. Some projects can yield a return on investment of even more — even recuperating the entire cost.

Where is a homeowner to start when it comes to maximizing the potential of a landscape? These projects and components can be a good place to start.

NATURAL STONE PATIOS

A high-quality patio can offer a great ROI. These patios may use the same stone levels and lines as the interior of the home.

OUTDOOR KITCHENS

HGTV says an outdoor kitchen ROI can range from 55 percent to 200 percent, depending on the location and comparable homes in the area. High-value versions include built-in grills, weather-resistant cabinetry, and stone prep areas.

CLIMATE-CONTROLLED PERGOLAS

Pergolas on their own can add interest and function to outdoor spaces. Those that feature motorized louvers that adjust for sun and rain have become a luxury essential for many homeowners. They help extend the usability of outdoor spaces during various seasons.

SMART LIGHTING SYSTEMS

Integrated systems with LED lights controlled by apps are now major selling points for homes. These systems improve security and curb appeal at night. According to Urban Oasis Contracting, outdoor lighting doesn't just show a space, but also transforms it. Adding carefully placed lights can redefine the property in distinct ways.

SOFTSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS

Mature trees can add character to a property and also reduce cooling costs via natural shade. Landscapes that require low irrigation are outperforming traditional lawns, according to Organic Valley.

Homeowners looking to get great returns on outdoor living investments can consider prized improvements that transform exterior living spaces.



MARKET UPDATE – MAY 2026

AURORA	KING
AVERAGE SALES PRICE	AVERAGE SALES PRICE
$1,181,220	$1,815,404
AVERAGE 55 DAYS ON MARKET	AVERAGE 48 DAYS ON MARKET
NUMBER OF SALES	NUMBER OF SALES
71	22
198 NEW LISTINGS	135 NEW LISTINGS
SALE TO LIST RATIO	SALE TO LIST RATIO
100%	94%
YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE	YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE
-12.06%	-9.21%

*The statistics provided were obtained from the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board's Market Watch MAY 2026; Summary of Existing Home Transactions for All Home Types, MAY 2026 + Focus on the MLS Home Price Index for Composite, MAY 2026 for York Region's Aurora and King

The York Region real estate market continued to gain momentum in May, with more buyers returning to the market while inventory levels began to tighten. Across the GTA, home sales increased by 6.3% compared to May 2025, while new listings declined by nearly 19%, creating a more balanced environment than we've seen over the past year. For buyers, opportunities still exist. While prices remain below last year's levels in many segments, increased competition for well-presented and accurately priced homes means hesitation can be costly. Detached homes and family-oriented properties in desirable neighbourhoods continue to attract strong interest, particularly in communities such as Aurora, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury, and parts of Markham. For sellers, the market is rewarding realistic pricing and strong presentation. Homes priced according to current market conditions are selling, while those listed based on past market highs are often sitting longer and requiring price adjustments. As we head into summer, the market appears to be moving toward balance. Whether you're considering buying or selling, success in today's market comes down to strategy, timing, and understanding the conditions in your specific neighbourhood and price range. Key Advantage is always here as a trusted advisor to provide support, guidance and information.

– Provided by Key Advantage Team Royal LePage RCR Realty
Lindsay Strom, Broker
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* Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract.

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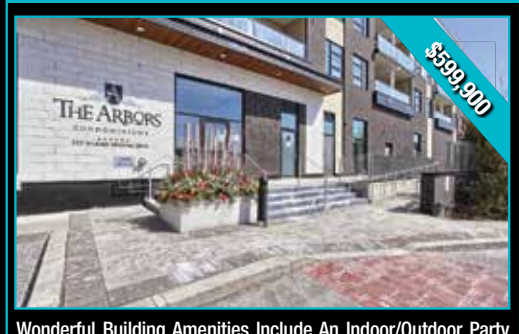
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RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS



SELLING IN A SLOWER MARKET:
Why Homes Aren't Moving (and What Actually Fixes It)

If you've been watching the market in King and the surrounding communities, you've likely noticed the same trend many homeowners are feeling firsthand: listings are sitting longer, showings can be sporadic, and price reductions are more common than they were in the fast-paced years we've recently experienced.

That can be frustrating — especially for sellers who are motivated, have a great home, and are wondering why it isn't moving. The truth is, in a slower market, homes don't sell simply because they're listed. They sell when they are positioned correctly against today's competition.

Here are the most common reasons homes stall — and what actually fixes it.

1 PRICING ISN'T MATCHING THE MARKET IN REAL TIME

This is the biggest factor, and it's also the most misunderstood. Many sellers still anchor to last year's headlines, a neighbour's sale from a different market cycle, or an online estimate that doesn't reflect current buyer behaviour.

In a slower market, buyers compare everything. If your price doesn't align with the best alternatives available right now, buyers don't "negotiate first" — they often don't book a showing at all. Or they tour the home, like it, then wait to see if the price comes down.

WHAT FIXES IT: pricing that's based on current competition and recent comparable sales — not old momentum. Sometimes the right strategy is to price in the most active buyer bracket so you're competing where demand is strongest, instead of chasing a number that looks good on paper but doesn't generate action.

2 THE HOME ISN'T PRESENTING AS AN "EASY YES"

In a hot market, buyers tolerated more. In a slower market, they become pickier — not because they're unreasonable, but because they have more choice and more time to think.

SMALL THINGS ADD UP: clutter that makes rooms feel smaller, dated paint colours that distract, a tired front entrance, heavy furniture that blocks flow, or lighting that makes a space feel darker than it is. When a home feels like a "project," buyers mentally discount the price — even if the issues are cosmetic.

WHAT FIXES IT: a focused prep plan. This doesn't mean renovating everything. It means doing the few high-impact improvements that change first impressions: decluttering, cleaning, minor repairs, touch-up paint, improved lighting, and thoughtful staging or styling to help buyers understand the space. The goal is to reduce hesitation.

3 MARKETING ISN'T DOING THE HEAVY LIFTING

Most buyers decide whether to see a home based on what they see online first. If the photos are dark, the angles are unhelpful, or the listing doesn't clearly communicate the value, you lose momentum before the first showing.

In today's market, "just put it on MLS" isn't enough. Strong marketing should tell a story: layout, lifestyle, function, and what makes the home stand out compared to similar listings.

WHAT FIXES IT: professional photography, clear feature highlights, and marketing that answers the buyer's unspoken question: Why this home over the others? That includes strong online presentation, but also how showings are scheduled, how feedback is managed, and how quickly adjustments are made if the market response is quiet.

4 CONDITION SURPRISES ARE CREATING DOUBT

Sometimes buyers walk in expecting one thing based on photos and price — and then notice issues that weren't obvious online: worn flooring, aging windows, roof concerns, moisture staining, or maintenance that suggests the home hasn't been cared for. Even minor issues can make buyers worry there's "more behind it."

When confidence drops, offers drop.

WHAT FIXES IT: addressing obvious maintenance items before listing, being transparent where necessary, and considering proactive steps such as pre-listing quotes for key items (roof, HVAC, etc.) so buyers don't feel they're stepping into unknown costs.

5 THE STRATEGY ISN'T ADAPTING FAST ENOUGH

In a slower market, speed matters — not just in selling, but in responding to the market's feedback.

If you have showings but no offers, the issue is often price, terms, or condition perception. If you have little to no showing activity, the issue is usually price or online presentation (or both). Waiting weeks to adjust can cost you your best window: the early days when a listing is new and buyers are paying attention.

WHAT FIXES IT: a clear plan before launch (pricing, prep, marketing, showing strategy) and a structured review process after launch. The goal is to make smart, informed adjustments quickly rather than hoping the market changes on its own.

A slower market doesn't mean you can't sell — it means you need a plan

Many homes are still selling, even in calmer conditions. The difference is that the successful listings are positioned well: they're priced accurately, presented thoughtfully, marketed professionally, and adjusted quickly when needed.

If your home isn't getting the response you expected, it doesn't automatically mean "the market is terrible." It usually means something in the positioning needs to change — and that's solvable.

If you're considering a move and would like straightforward advice on your options in today's market, feel free to contact Michele Denniston at 416-433-8316 or michele@micheledenniston.com.

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WRITTEN BY: The Michele Denniston Real Estate Team

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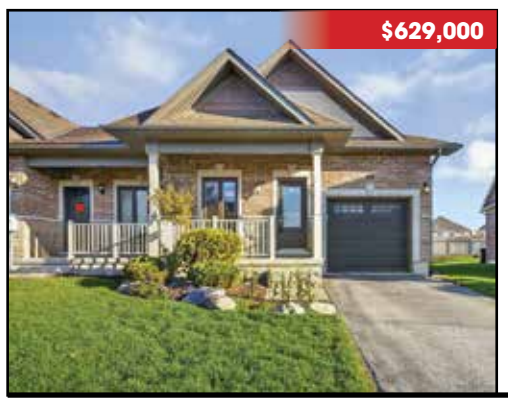
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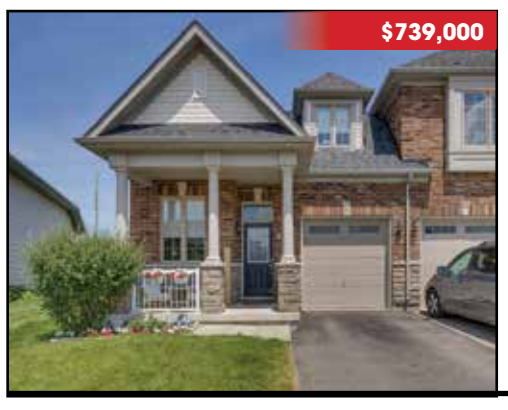
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A rundown on countertops



Kitchen renovations continue to top the list of improvements that offer a high rate of return on investment. Buyers pay attention to kitchens, which undoubtedly affects the ROI of kitchen renovations. According to the Journal of Light Construction's "Cost vs. Value Report 2025," a minor kitchen remodel offers an ROI of 113 percent, while a midrange remodel offers an ROI of 51 percent. Replacing a kitchen countertop can help homeowners see improvements to the functionality of their spaces and improve the value of their homes.

Those thinking about overhauling their spaces with new countertops can consider the leading materials and how they rank in cost, maintenance and durability.

ENGINEERED QUARTZ

The National Kitchen & Bath Association reports that 78 percent of design professionals expect quartz to be the preferred countertop material over the next several years. Quartz is non-porous, so it will resist stains, scratches and bacteria infiltration without having to be sealed. Unlike natural stone, quartz offers pattern uniformity, which makes it easier to map out seamless transitions. Quartz costs between $50 and $150 per square foot installed.

GRANITE

Granite still holds a considerable chunk of the countertops market and remains a solid standard for those who value a one-of-a-kind look of natural stone. Granite has exceptional heat resistance and adds significant resale value. However, it requires periodic sealing to maintain its good looks. Costs range from $40 to $190 per square foot.

PORCELAIN

Porcelain tiles and slabs are projected to become the fastest-growing segment in the ceramic tiles market, according to reports from Yahoo Finance. High-precision printing technology enables porcelain to mimic rare marble and other stone with superior accuracy. Porcelain is even harder than granite and effectively impervious to UV rays. This makes the material a solid choice for outdoor kitchens. Plus, at a cost of $60 to $120 per square foot, it is competitive with other similar materials.

BUTCHER BLOCK

Those who appreciate a soft, organic texture and "warmth" in their spaces can look to butcher block. Wood is making a comeback, as many homeowners are moving away from stark, white designs. Butcher block is self-healing, meaning scratches can be sanded out. Butcher block costs between $50 and $150 per square foot.

LAMINATE

Laminate is a budget-friendly option for homeowners at $20 to $80 per square foot, but is not as durable as other materials. Some laminates mimic the look of high-end materials, and they don't require much maintenance.

Countertops affect the look and feel of kitchens and other interior and exterior spaces. Choosing materials comes down to cost, durability and maintenance.

Did you know?

The waterfall edge style of countertops has evolved from a high-end niche trend into an increasingly popular staple of modern architectural design. Unlike traditional countertops that end at the edge of the cabinet, a waterfall edge makes a 90-degree turn and continues down to the floor, covering a kitchen peninsula or island. According to Angi, waterfall edge countertops are known for their seamless and continuous appearances that really are show-stopping to see. They tend to make a bigger visual impact compared to traditional horizontal slabs. It's important to note that not every stone fabricator is willing or able to execute the waterfall effect. Installation requires a precise mitered edge, which risks chipping the fine-cut corner. The added expense also is nothing to take lightly. Waterfall edges also can make cleaning more involved. There is no lip at the end of counters, so it's hard to get a dustpan flush to catch crumbs off the surface. Also, the side panels of stone mean there's extra surfaces to clean and seal. The uniqueness of waterfall edge countertops merits careful consideration prior to installation.





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46 TANNERY CREEK CRESCENT, AURORA
$1,538,000



59 DAWLISH AVENUE, AURORA
$1,299,000



RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

Quick tips to help protect your home from windy weather

(NC) Strong winds can cause a lot of damage, especially if you're unprepared. Even everyday items can become unexpected hazards in a sudden, powerful gust. Taking a few preventive steps now can help protect your home before the windy weather arrives. Here are some simple ways to prepare:

Minimize the potential for fast-flying objects:

• Secure outdoor items like patio furniture, trash cans, barbecues and fuel tanks.

• Trim weak or overhanging tree branches near your home.

• Gravel and rocks in your garden can damage siding and other parts of your home's exterior. Consider using softer materials, like mulch or dirt, instead.

Check your property's exterior strength:

• Make sure your roof is in good condition. Repair loose shingles and consider installing impact-resistant roofing.

• Strengthen your garage doors with braces and use a sturdy deadbolt on double doors.

• Have fencing, porches and canopies inspected to ensure they're secure. Replace any weak or loose fence components.

Get prepared inside the home:

• Keep an emergency kit with flashlights, batteries and basic supplies. Don't forget to ensure all essential items are charged.

• Take photos of your home and belongings before a storm to make any damage assessment easier. There are digital tools from insurers, including Belairdirect, that let customers submit claims, upload documentation and track their progress online if they suffer a covered loss.

• Identify a safe room in your home, such as a basement or windowless bathroom, where you can take shelter during high wind warnings.

Reviewing your insurance coverage is another important practical measure. Providers like Belairdirect offer home, condo and tenant insurance options to help protect your belongings. A regular review can help ensure your coverage is keeping up with your needs.

Strong winds and storms can be unpredictable but staying aware and prepared will help you be ready for whatever the sky throws at you.



HOW TO SPOT foundation ISSUES AT HOME

Home ownership can be a rewarding endeavor and a good investment over time.

But homes require consistent upkeep to ensure a property remains safe, a condition of ownership that renters typically do not need to concern themselves with.

Foundation issues are a component of home ownership that can be easy to forget, as such concerns are not necessarily evident in frequently visited areas of a home. A foundation provides structural integrity for the entire home, so addressing damage is essential. The experts at This Old House indicate that some foundation issues can be relatively easy and inexpensive to address. Other issues may not be so simple, especially if they challenge the structural integrity of a home.

Learning to recognize foundation issues can help homeowners sort through small problems and big ones. But what are signs of foundation problems? Consider these potential issues, as noted by This Old House, Robbie Breaux & Team Real Broker, LLC and Bay Crawl Space Foundation Repair.

CRACKS IN WALLS

Cracks appearing in foundation walls, drywall or plaster, especially diagonal or stair-step cracks forming near doorways, windows or corners, might be indicative of foundation movement. If a crack has formed in a living space, something is likely moving below since floors are supported from the foundation upward. Cracks thicker than one-quarter of an inch in foundation walls or home walls can be a problem.

SAGGING PORCHES AND STOOPS

Notable sagging of porches or stoops can indicate that a house is sinking or changing faster than other areas.

SEPARATION BETWEEN DOOR AND WINDOW FRAMES AND WALLS

Gaps can form around windows and doors if the foundation is shifting. The gaps that form can lead to water and pest infiltration if left untreated, causing even more issues.

CABINETS AND COUNTERTOPS SEPARATING FROM WALLS

Homeowners who notice considerable space forming between cabinets or countertops and the wall indicate that the frame of the home is out of square. That likely means a foundation is settling or sinking.

SQUEAKY, BOUNCY OR SAGGING FLOORS

While these issues in floors may not always result from foundation issues, they often indicate that moisture has invaded the basement or crawl space. That moisture may have gained access through a cracked or compromised foundation.

LEANING OR CRACKED CHIMNEY

If a chimney resembles the Leaning Tower of Pisa, it could be a sign of possible foundation issues causing settling or sinking.

Bringing in a professional to assess potential foundation issues is a good idea. While certain foundation problems can be remedied by homeowners themselves, it's best to rule out more serious issues that may require professional expertise before going the DIY route.



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RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

BUILDING MORE THAN HOMES



By Julien Laurion
Real Estate

Recently, I had the honour of being recognized as one of the Top 40 Under 40 by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce and Central York Chamber of Commerce. It was a humbling experience and, like many award recipients, it forced me to reflect on the question everyone seems to ask afterward: "How did you get here?"

The truth is, my career path hasn't exactly been conventional.

Most people know me as a Realtor. Others know me as a contractor. Some know me from community organizations, volunteer work, or local events. What many people don't realize is that all of those pieces have always been connected. While it may look like I've built two separate businesses, I've always viewed them as one mission: helping people make better decisions about their homes.

Over the years, I've sat at lots of kitchen tables discussing everything from renovation budgets and flooring selections to market values and moving plans. What became clear early on was that homeowners weren't necessarily looking for a Realtor or a contractor. They were looking for guidance. They wanted someone who could help them understand not only what their home was worth today, but what it could be worth tomorrow.

That realization led to the unique partnership between my real estate business and residential contracting company. One side helps clients understand the market, while the other helps them understand the possibilities. Together, they create a perspective that allows homeowners to make informed decisions, whether they're preparing to sell, renovating for their family's needs, or planning for the future.

One of the most rewarding aspects of working in both industries is seeing the direct impact that strategic improvements can have on a family's financial future. I've watched renovations transform not only homes but opportunities, helping clients maximize their investment and create spaces that better suit their lives. In some cases, thoughtful renovation planning has added well over $100,000 in value to a property at resale. In other cases, the most valuable advice I could offer was encouraging someone not to spend money at all. Contrary to popular belief, not every renovation is a good investment, and sometimes the smartest decision is knowing when to leave things exactly as they are.

As much as people like to talk about houses, however, this business has never really been about houses. It's about people. It's about the young family purchasing their first home and imagining where the Christmas tree will go. It's about helping someone downsize after decades of memories in the same place. It's about guiding clients through exciting transitions, challenging circumstances, and life-changing decisions with honesty and care.

When I look back at what has contributed to my success, it isn't a sales number, a completed renovation, or even an award. It's the relationships that have been built along the way. Many clients have become repeat clients. Some have become friends. Others have trusted me enough to refer their parents, children, siblings, neighbours, and coworkers. In an industry built on trust, there is no greater compliment.



The Top 40 Under 40 recognition is something I am incredibly grateful for, but it is also a reflection of the community that has supported me throughout this journey. Aurora, Newmarket, and East Gwillimbury are communities where relationships still matter, where people support local businesses, and where a handshake still means something. I am fortunate to live and work in a place that values connection, collaboration, and community involvement.

As for what's next, the answer is simple. I'll continue helping families buy, sell, renovate, and invest in their homes. I'll continue looking for ways to create value for clients and contribute to the communities that have given so much to me. And yes, I'll probably continue spending a little too much time thinking about real estate, renovations, and home improvement projects. After all, whether it's through a sale, a renovation, or simply a conversation around a kitchen table, I've always believed the same thing:

It's all about homes.

Julien Laurion
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HVAC maintenance tips

to keep your cooling unit running strong

Upon the arrival of the dog days of summer, few things can be as welcoming as a cool home.

Air conditioned interior spaces offer a much-needed respite from summer heat, but that relief is not guaranteed. Indeed, a summer heat wave can be just as taxing on an HVAC unit as it can be on people. But some simple pre- and in-season maintenance tips can go a long way toward ensuring an HVAC unit provides ample relief once the mercury rises.

REPLACE THE AIR FILTER

Prior to summer, replace the filter on your HVAC unit. Doing so ensures dust, dirt, and allergens won't affect the efficiency of the unit. An inefficient HVAC unit will make it harder to cool the home, and that may force the unit to work harder, which in turn can lead to a higher energy bill.

DON'T FORGET THE CONDENSER

The condenser is the unit on the outside of your home. Over time, debris from the landscape, including dirt, grass, and leaves, can get inside the condenser and potentially affect the performance of the unit. While it's inevitable that some landscape debris will get into the condenser, routine checkups and removal of debris can ensure that the buildup is not excessive.

LEND A HAND INSIDE

For people who live in areas where summer can get especially hot, there may come a point in time when even the most well-maintained HVAC unit can use a hand. Homeowners can take certain steps during heat waves to improve the efficiency of their HVAC unit with an eye toward saving money and preventing the unit from overheating. Closing curtains and blinds during times of day when the heat is peaking or particular rooms in a home are drenched in sun can naturally lower the temperature inside a home, thus alleviating the burden on the HVAC system. Ceiling fans also can be employed while the air conditioner is running to circulate cool air more effectively. That can prevent the HVAC unit from working extra hard to cool the home.

TAKE A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO DINNERTIME

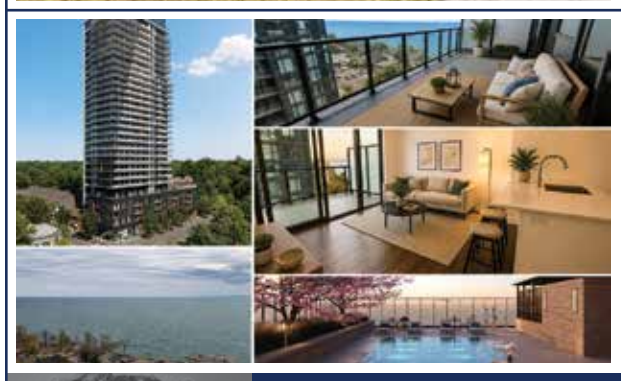
If you're accustomed to turning on the stove each night at dinnertime, recognize that doing so will increase the interior temperature of your home. As the temperature inside increases, the air conditioner will work harder to keep interior spaces cool and comfortable. That can be taxing on the HVAC unit and lead to higher energy costs. When it comes to dinnertime during the dog days of summer, consider cold dishes like salads and/or grilling so the stove can stay off as much as possible.

Some simple maintenance tips and strategies can ensure an HVAC unit provides ample relief come the dog days of summer.

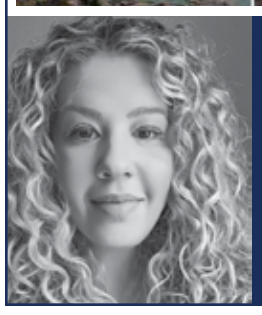




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RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

Signs an AC unit may need to be replaced

Summer is a season of relaxation. Warm air, longer hours of daylight and vacations from school and work make summer a laid back time of year.



Many people enjoy the warmer air of summer, but it's important to have a cool place to retreat once temperatures become particularly warm. That means a well-cooled home with an air conditioning system operating at peak capacity. A new HVAC system can last between 15 and 25 years. Homeowners whose systems are at least a decade and a half old can keep an eye out for the following signs that an HVAC may need to be replaced.

HIGHER ENERGY BILLS

Energy costs can vary widely by location, but homeowners know that their energy bills have been on the rise for years. FirstEnergy estimated that energy costs for New Jersey residents in 2025 could increase by more than 19 percent by the middle of the year, a point in time when many Garden State residents begin using their air conditioning units every day. That can make it hard to gauge if higher energy bills are a reflection of market price increases or a unit that needs replacement. But higher energy bills could indicate a unit is not working efficiently, which is a telltale sign of an HVAC that may need to be replaced. Compare energy bills from a year ago to current bills, and then factor in the price increase. If energy consumption is on the rise compared to a year ago, that could indicate an HVAC unit is working less efficiently.



A HUMID HOME

Humidity is a part of summer, but it's typically felt outdoors, not inside. A home with a humid interior while the AC is running could indicate a problem with the HVAC unit. According to HVAC.com, a functioning HVAC unit utilizes an evaporator coil to pull excess water vapor from the air in a home and drain it away from the home. If the air inside a home is humid, the unit might be having a mechanical issue that's preventing this important task from being performed.

FREQUENT REPAIRS

A telltale sign a unit needs to be replaced is the need for frequent repairs. Homeowners who are now on a first-name basis with their HVAC contractor may want to ask that professional if it's time to replace the unit. Money being spent on frequent repairs may be better repurposed toward financing the purchase of a new unit that could last as long as a quarter century.

POOR AIR FLOW

An HVAC unit operating at peak capacity will produce a steady flow of cool air through the vents throughout a home. Poor air flow through those vents means it will take longer than normal to cool a home, and homeowners can put their hands near the vents to see how well or how poorly air is flowing through them. If air is flowing poorly, the unit will have to work harder to cool the home, which will contribute to higher energy bills.

A fully functional air conditioning system is vital in summer. Some telltale signs any homeowner can spot may indicate an existing HVAC unit needs to be replaced.

When to consider duct cleaning

Homeowners know that maintenance is vital to protecting their home and their investment in it. A well-maintained home is both a point of pride and a sound investment.

Home maintenance can improve the look of a home, and such efforts also may help to make spaces healthier for residents and guests. Duct cleaning is a home maintenance task that homeowners look to with the intention of making interior spaces healthier. The United States Environmental Protection Agency notes that duct cleaning has never been shown to prevent health problems, but the EPA nonetheless advises homeowners to consider duct cleaning if certain conditions are present.

MOLD GROWTH

The EPA notes a duct cleaning may be necessary if there is substantial and visible mold growth inside hard surface ducts or on other components of a heating and cooling system. Mold growth can be difficult to confirm, as much of the heating and cooling system will not be visible. If an HVAC technician reports the presence of mold, ask that a sample be analyzed at a lab, which the EPA notes is the only way to confirm the presence of mold. The EPA estimates the cost to analyze a sample is roughly $50.

PRESENCE OF VERMIN

Rodents and insects in the ducts are a notable problem that needs to be remedied. A duct cleaning should be a component of vermin remediation, as rodents can leave feces in ducts, which may look like small brown pellets.

DUST AND DEBRIS ACCUMULATION

The EPA notes that dust and debris that accumulates in the ducts can clog them. This also can lead to dust, debris and particles being released into the home through the vents.

Duct cleaning can be part of the solution when homeowners are confronting certain conditions, including mold growth, vermin infestation, and excessive accumulation of dirt and debris. But the EPA notes it's important that the underlying cause is addressed to prevent future issues.



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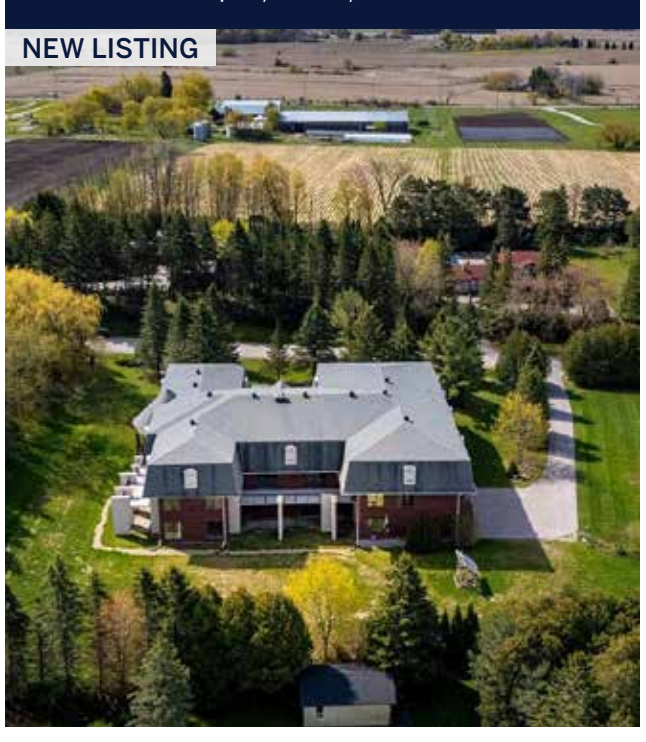


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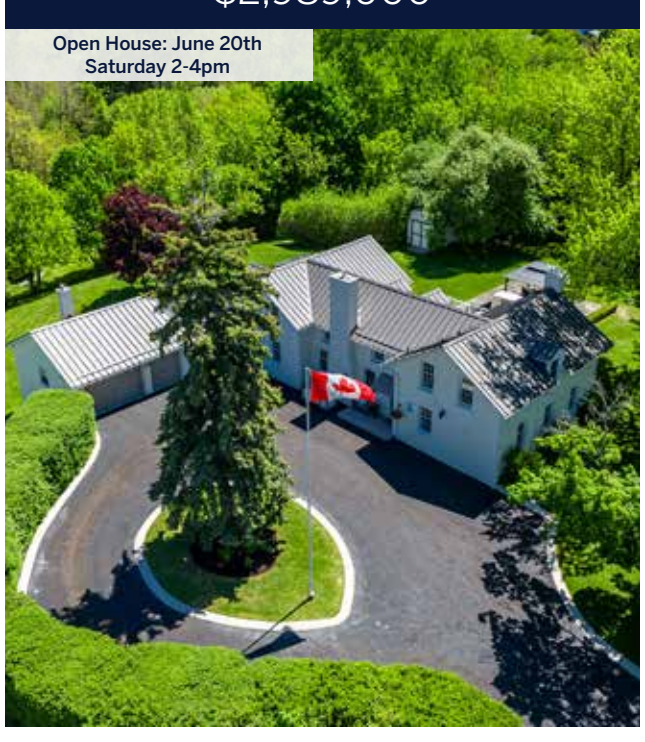
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