

Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

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Summer's in Full Swing

The month of July can seem to zip by. Make the most of it with these to-dos.

Unfurl a flag for the Fourth. Get in the Independence Day spirit by putting up an American flag on your porch in time to celebrate the Fourth of July.

Check safety devices. Carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors should be tested monthly; replace batteries as needed, and replace the entire device if it is more than 10 years old. Also, take a moment to check the expiration date on any fire extinguishers in the house and replace them if needed.

Clean windows inside and out. Keep that summer sunshine streaming in by giving windows a quick rinse with glass cleaner or a vinegar solution, then squeegee them dry or wipe with a clean microfiber cloth.

Prepare for summer guests. Before guests arrive, be sure to clear out your own personal items, make up the beds with fresh sheets and set out a stack of fresh towels.

Be pool safe. If you have a pool in your backyard, it is essential to keep it securely fenced with a self-closing, self-latching gate at least 4 feet high, to prevent children from jumping or falling in. Place a safety cover on your pool when not in use, and never allow anyone to swim in your pool alone. The

JULY HOME WARRANTY TIP: Seal air leaks. You may only notice drafty areas in the wintertime, but those same gaps are leaking out your air conditioned air all summer. Seal any leaks around windows and doors using weather stripping, caulk or spray foam insulation.

American Red Cross also recommends installing a pool alarm that will go off when anyone enters the pool. And if you have children, it's important to make sure they all learn to swim well, whether or not you have a pool of your own.

Add shade to the yard. Make your backyard more comfortable with an umbrella or shade sail. With ample shady spots to sit, you'll likely find yourself wanting to spend more time in your outdoor space — and shade is a must for summer backyard parties.

Conserve water. Cut down on unnecessary water use by watering your lawn and garden during the cooler, early morning hours. If you water when the sun is high, much of the water will simply evaporate instead of sinking into the soil where the roots can access it — and it can even scorch tender leaves.

Keep your home safe while traveling. Before you leave on a trip, take some time to put safety precautions in place. Let your neighbors know when you will be away

and ask a friend to check on your house from time to time. Motion-sensing exterior lighting, timed interior lighting and well-trimmed hedges can make your home a less appealing target for break-ins.

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Summer Care Tips for Furry Family Members

- Never leave your pet alone in a car during hot weather. A car's inside temperature can increase as much as 40 degrees in an hour—with 80 percent of that increase within the first 30 minutes. On an 85-degree day, the temperature inside a car with the windows cracked slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes!
- Provide plenty of water and shade for your pets while they're enjoying the great outdoors so they can stay cool.

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July Calendar

July 4th: Independence Day

July 3rd–August 15th: Air Conditioning Appreciation Days

National Grilling Month

National Hot Dog Month

Summer Care Tips for Furry Family Members

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- Pets and pools can equal disaster. Prevent free access to pools and always supervise a pet in a pool.
- Pets need exercise even when it is hot, but extra care needs to be taken with older dogs, short-nosed dogs, and those with thick coats. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Keep in mind that asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.



For more information visit The Humane Society of the United States:
<http://www.hsus.org/>

*Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend.
Inside of a dog it's too dark to read.—Groucho Marx*

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.

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CHICAGO-STYLE DOGS

July is National Hot Dog Month, so why not sample this Windy City classic? The frank should be all-beef, the bun should be poppyseed. All the ingredients must be piled onto the bun in the order specified.

Ingredients

- 1 all-beef hot dog
- 1 poppyseed hot dog bun
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 1 tablespoon sweet green pickle relish

- 1 tablespoon chopped onion
- 4 tomato wedges
- 1 dill pickle spear
- 2 sport peppers
- 1 dash celery salt

Directions

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Reduce heat to low, place hot dog in water, and cook 5 minutes or until done. Remove hot dog and set aside. Carefully place a steamer



basket into the pot and steam the hot dog bun 2 minutes or until warm.

Place hot dog in the steamed bun. Pile on the toppings in this order: yellow mustard, sweet green pickle relish, onion, tomato wedges, pickle spear, sport peppers, and celery salt. The tomatoes should be nestled between the hot dog and the top of the bun. Place the pickle between the hot dog and the bottom of the bun.

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