

# Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

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## End of Summer Projects

Stretch out these last days of summer by squeezing in a few more home projects, savoring simple pleasures and, when the time comes, cleaning up the beach toys and preparing the house for a busy fall. Pick from these to-dos to create your perfect August plan.

- **Finish up outdoor projects.** Make use of the long August days to finish up any outdoor projects you started (or intended to start) over the summer, from cleaning the gutters to adding a new deck.
- **Check your home for signs of pests.** The Environmental Protection Agency recommends taking preventative measures such as removing sources of food, water and shelter, and closing off places where pests can enter and hide. If you hire a pest control pro, ask him or her to use bait and/or crack and crevice control when possible — fogging should be a last resort.
- **Clean and store summer gear.** Once the last beach day is behind you, take the time to clean out the buckets, shovels and boogie boards so they're fresh and clean for next year.
- **Clean carpets and floors.** Sand and garden dirt tracked in over the summer can really take a toll on floors. Vacuum and mop floors, and have area rugs and carpeting professionally cleaned if needed.

**AUGUST HOME WARRANTY TIP: Refrigerator Not Operating?** Check for a damaged fuse or tripped circuit breaker first. Make sure it is plugged in properly and the plug or cord has not been damaged. If this doesn't solve the problem, call for repairs.

- **Check emergency kits.** Emergency supplies don't last forever — open up your kit and check expiration dates on food and any medications; replace as needed. Don't have an emergency kit yet? Make this the month you create one.
- **Organize closets before fall shopping.** Before making any new purchases, spend some time assessing what you already have in the closet. Doing this before shopping can help save money and prevent cluttering up your closet.
- **Clean out the garage.** If you haven't cleaned out your garage in a while, it's likely this project will take an entire weekend (or more), so plan accordingly. It helps to think ahead and find out where you can take items (donations, hazardous waste, things to sell) before starting, and get a dumpster if you think you will need it. And if you need help, consider hiring someone to assist you with part or all of the process.
- **Schedule some do-nothing time.** It can be surprisingly hard to relax and simply do nothing, even when you do have a pocket of free time. By scheduling a time to do nothing, you are actually giving yourself permission to fully relax.



For full article visit: [fnhw.us/2rsMZk5](http://fnhw.us/2rsMZk5)

## August Calendar

August 3: Watermelon Day

August 21–25: National Safe at Home Week



## Summer Tree Care

Basic maintenance and preventive services will keep your trees healthy and beautiful through the long, hot days and unexpected summer storms. Especially in younger trees, it's important to provide proper care before they show signs of stress, such as wilting or yellowing leaves.

1. **Get an Evaluation.** Summer is a great time to hire a professional tree service to evaluate the overall health of your property's trees. A certified arborist or degreed forester can suggest treatments and procedures to correct any problems as well as advise you on how to water and care for your trees to ensure they remain healthy and strong.
2. **Consider Cabling.** Summer storms can spell disaster for vintage trees and the property they shade. An arborist can examine trees on the property that are close to dwellings or vehicles and determine how to ensure that a wild windstorm or days of rain won't lead to major damage.

A tree professional may suggest remedies from simply removing dead limbs or cabling weak limbs up to removing any trees that might pose a hazard.

3. **A Little Off the Sides.** Summer pruning is crucial to tree health. Properly shaped and trimmed branches not only encourage strong growth leading into fall but also allow more sunlight to reach low shrubs and grassy areas around the landscape, improving both the health and curb appeal of the whole yard.

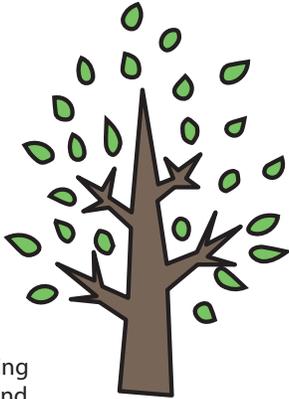
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## Summer Tree Care

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In addition, those homeowners with pools will have an added bonus of less debris to clean up from the water and around the deck, as well as sun-warmed water to luxuriate in during a late-day swim.

Be sure that your chosen tree service does not engage in the process of topping, an undesirable method of crown thinning involving cutting tree branches back to stubs that are unable to sustain future growth patterns. Topping, also known as heading, creates many more problems for the tree than it solves, including inviting potential insect and fungal damage in the long term.



Well-maintained trees not only provide gorgeous views outside your windows but also help raise the overall value of the home and surrounding property. A June consultation with a professional tree service employing a certified arborist can be the start of a summer love affair with your home's great outdoors.

For full article visit: [fnhw.us/2sZuq9i](http://fnhw.us/2sZuq9i)

## Celebrate Watermelon Day!

### WATERMELON FETA SALAD WITH MINT

#### Ingredients

1 7-8 lb. seedless watermelon, chilled

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

3 limes, juiced

1 1/2 tsp salt

3/4 tsp black pepper

1 cup fresh chopped mint leaves

1 1/2 cups crumbled feta cheese (goat or sheep milk feta is best)

This salad is best made just prior to serving. Prepare one hour or less before your meal. Cut rind from the watermelon, then chop the fruit into 1 inch chunks. Place chunks in a

colander to drain as your chop. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, fresh lime juice, salt, and black pepper to create a dressing. Place watermelon in a large salad bowl. Pour dressing and chopped mint over the watermelon and toss gently to coat. Pour the crumbled feta into the salad bowl and stir gently to integrate the cheese into the salad. Serve. The salt and the citrus in the dressing will activate the juices in the watermelon, so a lot of liquid will collect in the bottom of the salad bowl. This is normal, and does not affect the flavor. To avoid having liquid transfer to your plate, serve the salad with a slotted spoon.

For full article visit: [fnhw.us/2soJgbM](http://fnhw.us/2soJgbM)



**We've got you covered.** A home warranty from Fidelity National Home Warranty 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.

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