# Over the Fence NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

#### **ICON Realty**



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# July is Smart Irrigation Month

Smart Irrigation Month is a public awareness campaign to promote efficient water use. Using water wisely:

- Saves money on your utility bill.
- Nurtures green spaces that deliver real environmental benefits.
- Protects your community's water supply for generations to come.
- Minimizes needed investments in infrastructure to store and carry water, which must be paid for by property taxes or municipal bonds.

Automatic watering or sprinkler systems—known in the trade as irrigation systems—deliver exactly the right amount of water at the right time. Efficient irrigation systems:

- Minimize over watering while keeping your lawn and garden beautiful and healthy.
- Adjust watering automatically to account for rain and other conditions.
- Put every drop of water to work by minimizing evaporation and waste.
- Make maintaining your yard easy and convenient.

With just a few simple strategies, it's easy to save water, save money and see better results.

www.irrigation.org

JULY HOME WARRANTY TIP: In the summer, use the ceiling fan in the counterclockwise direction. While standing directly under the ceiling fan you should feel a cool breeze. The airflow produced creates a wind-chill effect, making you "feel" cooler.

# **Maintaining Your Air Conditioner**

It's easy to take your air conditioner for granted...until it stops working on a miserably hot day. Regular maintenance will not only help spot potential problems, but will also increase the life and energy efficiency of your unit.

#### What you can do

- Clean up around your air conditioner. Outdoor condenser coils can become dirty and blocked, which makes your unit work harder and increases your cooling bill. Your dryer vents, falling leaves, and lawn mower are all potential sources of dirt and debris. Allow for adequate air flow to your unit by cleaning the area around the condenser coil, removing any debris, and trimming foliage back at least 2 feet.
- Change your air filter regularly. Check your unit's air filter once a month and clean or replace filters as necessary. Keeping the filter clean can lower your air conditioner's energy consumption by 5% to 15%. Ask your service contractor to show you how to do this, if you aren't familiar with the process.





• Keep your condensation line clear. Condensate lines drain away the moisture your air conditioning unit creates. A plugged condensate drain can cause water damage in the house and affect indoor humidity levels. You can help keep the line clear of mold and mildew by pouring in a small amount of household bleach. Ask your service contractor to show you how.



# **Consider Creeping Perennials**

Almost every homeowner has an area in the landscape where grass just won't grow, but there is something you can do to fill in the space.

When deciding which perennials to plant, first determine how much you are going to use the planted area. Will the area have sun exposure? Will it experience light, moderate or heavy foot traffic? When choosing plants, keep in mind that the denser the plant, the more traffic it will take.

Curb appeal is another important consideration related to improving a home's landscape and overall appearance. Think about the elements of decor—brick, slate, concrete, paint color, and color schemes. Make plant choices that work well with the surroundings.

The next step is choosing the right plants for the area's environmental conditions. The number one thing to look for is sun to shade ratio and where the light hits. Next, test soil quality by taking a sample to a local garden center for analysis, and improving the soil's nutrient content if necessary. It's also important to make sure the area you will be planting in has adequate drainage.

Courtesy ARAcontent

# KALE-AND-BLUEBERRY SLAW WITH BUTTERMILK DRESSING

#### Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons grated onion
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon hot sauce (such as Tabasco)
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 Granny Smith apple, grated
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 6 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 6 tablespoons sour cream
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh tarragon
- 1/2 to 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. sugar
- 6 radishes, thinly sliced
- 4 medium carrots, cut into thin strips
- 1 bunch kale, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1/2 small head red cabbage, shredded
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup fresh raspberries

#### Preparation

- 1. Stir together first 6 ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid; let stand 5 minutes. Add buttermilk and next 3 ingredients. Cover jar with lid; shake vigorously until blended and smooth. Add salt, pepper, and sugar to taste.
- 2. Toss together radishes, next 5 ingredients, and 1/2 cup dressing in a large bowl; let stand 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with remaining dressing.

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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.

This is not intended as a solicitation if your property is currently listed with another agent. These materials contain information and articles obtained from third parties. FNHW does not endorse the recommendations of any third party nor guarantee the information provided is complete or correct.

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Call me today for a free and confidential real estate consultation.



