

Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...

Coldwell Banker American Home Realty

Suzanne Pelkey, CRS
REALTOR®
01512847



17571 Vierra Canyon Road
Prunedale, CA 93907
Phone: 831-206-3359
Fax: 831-663-0399
suzanne-pelkey@sbcglobal.net

"Dedicated to Serving Your Real Estate Needs"

VOLUME 9 • ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2011



This Winter Air Seal and Insulate with ENERGY STAR

Sealing and insulating your home—its outer walls, ceiling, windows, doors, and floors—is often the most cost effective way to improve energy efficiency and comfort. ENERGY STAR estimates that a knowledgeable homeowner can save up to 20% on heating and cooling costs (or up to 10% on their total annual energy bill) by sealing and insulating.

Sealing Leaks: Many air leaks and drafts are easy to find because they are easy to feel—like those around windows and doors. But holes hidden in attics are usually bigger problems. Sealing these leaks with caulk, spray foam, or weather stripping will have a great impact on improving your comfort and reducing utility bills.

Adding Insulation: Insulation keeps your home warm in the winter and cool in the summer. There are several common types of insulation—fiberglass (in both batt and blown forms), cellulose, rigid foam board, and spray foam.

To get the biggest savings, the easiest place to add insulation is usually in the attic. A quick way to see if you need more insulation is to look across your uncovered attic floor. If your insulation is level with or below the attic floor joists, you probably need to add more insulation.

Sealing Ducts: In houses with forced-air heating and cooling systems, ducts are used to distribute conditioned air throughout the house. In a typical house, about 20 percent of the air that moves through the duct system is lost due to leaks and poorly sealed connections. The result is higher utility bills and difficulty keeping the house comfortable, no matter how the thermostat is set.

For information on how to do-it-yourself, visit your local home improvement store and visit www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_sealing

Projects for Instant Curb Appeal

Tips and tricks to make your home look its best this Winter

Check out these tips excerpted from an article found at www.familyhandyman.com.

- **Paint, paint, paint:** Few projects can transform a house as dramatically and inexpensively as paint. Top-notch paint costs only a few dollars more per gallon, but it will cover better, go on smoother and last longer than the cheap stuff—it's a smart investment.



- **Install new house numbers:** Replace shabby or dated-looking numbers with ones made of brass, aluminum or stainless

steel. They'll look best if the finish matches that of the light fixture and door hardware.

- **Upgrade your mailbox:** A new mailbox updates your home's overall appeal.
- **Line a walkway with bricks or pavers:** Look for a wide assortment of pavers at brickyards and garden centers.
- **Replace a light fixture:** Consider function as well as style when selecting a fixture; it should light up your steps, house numbers and door without being too dominant.
- **Plant a tree:** Plant a tree and you get not only curb appeal but also shade, fall color and an improved view from the inside.
- **Add low-voltage lighting:** Low-voltage lights are available in many styles and create safer walkways and add dramatic nighttime style.
- **Install shutters:** Decorative shutters can add color, quaintness and depth to a house.
- **Install flower boxes:** Mount a window box below double-hung, slide-by or stationary windows. Build your own window box or buy one from a garden center.

For the full article visit: www.familyhandyman.com/DIY-Projects/How-A-House-Works/Home-Improvements/projects-for-instant-curb-appeal





Coldwell Banker American Home Realty
Suzanne Pelkey, CRS - REALTOR®

17571 Vierra Canyon Road
 Prunedale, CA 93907

Presorted
 Standard Mail
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Salinas, CA
 Permit #181



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.

Get Organized in 2011

Looking for tips and tricks to get organized this year? Visit the super cool website organizedhome.com/printable! A great online resource for all your organization needs. Just a few of the free printables include:

- **Household Notebook:** 41 images of printable inventory forms, menu planners, information pages and household checklists for your household notebook, home management binder or family planner.
- **Printable Calendars:** 24 free printable calendar pages; find one or two that suit your needs.
- **Lined Blank Pages:** pick from 9 images for lined pages to track lists, notes or other information to help you stay organized.
- **Spring Cleaning Checklists:** 14 images to help you track and organize weekly assignments for your cleaning. It’s never too early to start!
- **Crafts and Hobbies:** Free printable inventory pages, planners and checklists for sewing, scrapbooking, crafts, etc.
- **Sidetracked Home Executives:** 9 printable pages to help organize your home.

For all this and more, visit <http://organizedhome.com/printable>

January is National Soup Month



A fast-food first! Soup has been so popular throughout time that it’s actually considered one of the first fast foods. There is documentation that as early as 600 B.C., the Greeks sold soup as a fast food on the street, using peas, beans and lentils as main ingredients.

Before there was soup, there was broth, which people used to pour over a piece of bread in a bowl. That bread was known as sop, and from sop came the word soup.

For full article visit: www.housing.k-state.edu/dining/FitCourse/justforfun/01-soupmonth.html



- January 1: **New Year's Day**
- January 10: **National Cut Your Energy Cost Day**
- January 17: **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- National Get Organized Month**
- National Hot Tea Month**
- National Soup Month**

LENTIL SOUP

- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 (14.5 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 2 cups dry lentils
- 8 cups water
- 1/2 cup spinach, rinsed and thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- salt and ground black pepper to taste



In a large soup pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions, carrots, and celery; cook and stir until onion is tender. Stir in garlic, bay leaf, oregano, and basil; cook for 2 minutes.

Stir in lentils, and add water and tomatoes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer for at least 1 hour. When ready to serve stir in spinach, and cook until it wilts. Stir in vinegar, and season to taste with salt and pepper, and more vinegar if desired.