

Marketing green real estate – part three

Prepping the Green House for Sale

You've won the green contract. Now, you've got to prepare the property for the market.

First of all, be realistic. The seller is not likely ready to embark on major renovations, but small touches can make a big difference. And much of the green agent's job lies in recognizing and accentuating those great attributes that already exist.

All Accredited Greenagents® come armed with the National Association Of Green Agents and Brokers' (NAGAB) Energy Conservation Checklist – prepared with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Energy. Designed to determine the energy efficiency of homes, it gives the agent another level of information that many potential buyers (and other agents) miss at first glance. You can use it to bring some of the green features to their attention.

An insulated attic might not sound like the most common selling point, but if you can convert that and other details into dollars off the energy bill, you'll engage your audience. Sit down with the client's utility bills. Are the kilowatt hours lower than the norm? It may be because the client never eats in, or never showers. But maybe it's the good insulation, and the energy-efficient appliances. Maybe they have a tankless water heater. Find out, and you can add value to the sale.

Once you've brought out the hidden virtues of the property, you can recommend cheap but effective touch-ups. The checklist covers all areas of the home and gives ideas for low-cost adjustments that will increase energy efficiency – and comfort. If the client needs to paint half the house, why not suggest the low-VOC option? If the floors need to be redone, why not go for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) wood? Low-flow shower heads aren't too expensive, but they can reduce water consumption by 50 percent. (And with the cost of water going up by about nine percent per year in Toronto, cutting down

on consumption is becoming an increasing priority.)

Accredited Greenagents® are equipped with the tools and the latest technologies in energy efficiency and green real estate. From recognizing and bringing out the eco-friendly features of a property, to knowing the key elements of environmental staging, they know how to get a better value on the sale by letting the green shine through.