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COVID-19: How We Will Safely Serve You

A message to Canadians,

This is a stressful time for all of us, as together we are facing an unprecedented global crisis. COVID-19 has forced us to adapt to an ever-changing reality as we fight to contain the virus.

Some five million families, 35% of the population, relocated to new homes over the past five years. Many of you have made serious plans to do exactly that this spring – you have moved cities, transferred employment, gotten married, or retired. You were planning to buy, sell or rent a home. Some of you have purchased a home and have not yet sold your existing property. And like many Canadians, the health emergency caused by the coronavirus has forced you to reevaluate the way forward.



First and foremost, we want you to know that across the country, Royal LePage has and will continue to take action to protect our clients, employees and front-line agents. The safety measures we are taking are being guided by public health authorities and the government, and often go well beyond.

The biggest change you will see relates to how you will communicate and conduct business with your Royal LePage office or REALTOR®. Our team has access to the industry's leading operating platform, technology that allows a Royal LePage professional to keep in touch with you, share property details, complete real estate valuations and conduct transactions electronically.

During the crisis, our office personnel across the country have moved to full work-from-home status, serving our agents while they work from their homes to serve you. In some jurisdictions, controlled access to properties to facilitate listing or purchasing will continue, supported by best-practice disinfection, cleanliness and above all else, strictly limited person-to-person exposure.

In other regions, we will work with provincial governments to offer purely electronic client interactions for the limited period of time that citizens are asked to do their part and stay in place. The company and our agents will continue to be there to discuss your situation and plan next steps, be it through phone, email, text or social media channels.

Canadians have placed their trust in Royal LePage for over 100 years. During this crisis, we are 100% committed to maintaining that trust.

The positive impact of these extraordinary precautions will take some weeks to begin to show up in the community health data. While we don't know how long our way of life will be so severely restricted, we do know that this too shall pass. We are talking weeks and months, not years of sacrifice. And know this — Canada is as strong and able to meet these challenges as any nation on earth.

As a final word, we can't say enough about our talented medical and scientific community, the people who are risking their health in providing essential services, and our political leaders at all levels, who are working tirelessly to keep us safe. Canadians owe you all our endless gratitude.

Phil Soper

President & CEO - Royal LePage

March Residential Resales Withstand Pressure of World Crisis

Members of the Ottawa Real Estate Board (OREB) sold 1,525 residential properties in March 2020 compared with 1,507 in March 2019, an increase of only 1.2%.

"Our results show that the Ottawa real estate market seems to have withstood the pressure of a worldwide economic event in March, however in context with our market's performance up to this point, we can see the underlying effect. Before the pandemic, monthly unit sales were increasing between 10-16% from 2019, while March's sales were just on par with a year ago. This is an indicator that there has been a slowdown in the real estate market due to Covid-19," reports OREB's President.

The average sale price of a residential-class property sold in March in the Ottawa area was \$559,739, an increase of 16.5% over February 2019. The average sale price for a condominium-class property was \$369,311 an increase of 27.3% from March 2019.

"Once the Ontario State of Emergency began, our Member and Brokerages rightly began to make all adjustments necessary for the health and well-being of our clients and customers. We welcomed the government's declaration of real estate as an essential service so that transactions in progress could be completed. However, it was not and is not business as usual for our Members. They are heeding government and public health authority warnings and advice and are being diligent in taking extra safety precautions. All this, while still doing their best to help their clients successfully conclude or close real estate transactions that were already in progress," OREB's President acknowledges.

Call today for real estate advice and information!

With kids at home, get them involved in Spring Cleaning

As the warmer temperatures begin to roll in, there is no thought more prevalent than the beginning of spring cleaning. Spring is a time when all the forgotten places of winter begin to come to light, and there is nothing more refreshing than refreshing your home. A major topic these days is how to involve your kids in spring cleaning, especially in a way that is fun and engaging for them. The hope is to get your kids involved and wanting to help clean, not only to teach them the value of hard work, and the importance of cleaning up after themselves, but to get you an extra pair of hands (or two) to get this project done faster. What then, are some of the best ways to get your kids involved in this year's spring cleaning?

Make sure tasks are age appropriate – Make it a game!

Obviously, the tasks that you can involve your kids in does depend on their age and ability, however there are so many ways to make cleaning fun and get kids of any age involved in the process. To begin with – pump up the music. Getting some good tunes playing and letting cleaning be combined with a motivating dance party is the first step in making cleaning fun with your kids. Turn a boring chore into an easy task with great music playing. With younger kids, you can turn the music into a game, such as "wax museum", having your kids freeze in place when the music stops. This is not only a fun challenge for them, but also a simple test of balance and coordination too! Making cleaning into a variety of games can help motivate your kids and get cleaning done faster. Older children can be given more challenging tasks such as alphabetizing the spice drawer or playing "expiration date detective" with cleaning out the refrigerator.

Be Organized!

Organization is key when it comes to cleaning and putting things away. Making sure that your home is organized, and things have their own place. This can help your children learn where to put their toys when tidying up. Creating games like "scavenger hunt" when it comes to toy box clean up can help motivate younger children. Another great idea is to give your children their own tools/cleaning supplies for the tasks they need to complete. This gives them a bigger sense of responsibility, and also means they won't be interrupting your cleaning looking for supplies. Remember to start small. You can't overhaul your entire house in one day, especially when you have children running around. Setting aside time

each day or on the weekend and breaking your spring cleaning into smaller tasks such as going through toy boxes and closets one day, and cleaning windows the next, can help make spring cleaning feeling more manageable for you, and more fun for your kids.

Make it a teachable moment

Cleaning with your kids helps them to learn their responsibility when it comes to tidying up after themselves. Allowing older children to choose their own tasks increases this sense of responsibility and having "rewards" can be motivating. The rewards could be monetary (and adjusted for the age of your children) or it could be a points-related game in which your kids earn points for tasks completed. Remember that team work makes dream work, and partnering up your younger children with a parent, or older sibling can help ensure that they feel confident in their new responsibilities, and the task is completed efficiently.

Help your kids see the bigger picture

Lastly, involve your children in the bigger picture when it comes to spring cleaning. As you go through your home (closets, toys etc.) involve your kids in setting aside toys that are to be donated. Have them come with you when you make the donations and allow them to be involved in the sorting process. Focus on acquiring less, and using more of what you already have. Spring cleaning doesn't have to be an undesirable chore. By involving your kids, and creating fun cleaning games and races they can do, you can help them learn the importance of cleaning and their responsibility, all while accomplishing your seasonal tasks!

