

# News ON THE HOUSE

## January



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Be sure to talk to your real estate professional on how you can protect your home & budget with First American



### Happy New Year!

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter which is full of tips and ideas for you as a homeowner.

As an experienced real estate professional, I have an in-depth understanding of my clients' needs and challenges. I want you to know that my experience is at your disposal, so please feel free to call me for any of your real estate and/or home warranty needs.

### Resolve to Get Organized in 2010

Start 2010 with a bang: organize your home and work space! Take the first step by installing shelving that is specifically suited to maximize your space. To successfully clear out and keep out clutter, you need storage space. When measuring the space for your shelving project, go up as high as you can. If you have a 9-foot ceiling, use shelving units that are 8-feet high. If you have large and bulky items to store, use shelves that are as deep as your space will allow. Shelving units that are 24-inch, 30-inch, 36-inch deep or even deeper provide much-needed room.

The more shelves you have in each unit, the greater your storage space per square feet of density. For example, a 24-inch-deep by 48-inch-wide shelving unit will occupy 8 square feet of floor space. If you erect a shelving unit 8 feet high and add eight shelves to the unit, you would create 128 square feet of shelving space in just 8 square feet of floor space. Think higher, deeper, wider and add as many shelf levels as possible if you want to get the most density out of your floor space.

Be organized (always), be practical (keep it simple) and get some functional shelving. Wall-mounted decorative shelving is a wonderful complement to just about any room, and they create shelving space where free-standing shelving wouldn't be appropriate. Consider glass shelving for a more contemporary design, or wood grain shelves for a softer, warmer tone.

Whatever your interior design tastes, there are shelves that will satisfy your desire for form and function. With



decorative wall-mounted shelving, you can display your prized items like trophies, pottery and pictures in frames. Your home and office should reflect your personality, so choose personalized displays. Using the right shelf will get you on your way to being organized.

An efficient home is a happy home. Start 2010 happy and organized!

## DID YOU KNOW...

Having **the right home protection plan** helps ensure that **your home & your budget is protected.**

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## Is Your Chair Cramping Your Style?

People spend about 80,000 hours of their lives doing work while sitting. Sitting in an uncomfortable chair can be unpleasant, if not unhealthy, so workers should choose their office chairs carefully.

“It’s important to have a chair that adjusts in height and depth, offers recline and provides armrest options to avoid work-related injuries,” says Fred Colony, vice president of case goods and seating for The HON Company, a

designer and manufacturer of office furniture.

From comfort and adjustability to style and longevity, an ideal chair exists for every worker. Some companies now allow employees to vote for different chair styles. “They have employees test out different sample chairs,” says Colony. “Testers then vote on the ones they like best. Chairs no longer simply appear in a workplace. Employees now have a definitive say.”

Here are some useful pointers when searching for a comfortable office chair:

A good chair allows you to use as much of the seat back as possible for support, especially for your lower back.

Chairs should have adequate space between the back of your knees and the front edge of the seat.

Quality chairs should conform to the curves of your body, avoiding pressure points that cause discomfort.

Task chairs should be stable and have easily adjustable ergonomic controls that can be reached from a seated position or, better yet, passive ergonomic adjustments that maintain a comfortable configuration as the user moves.

A lifetime warranty on the frame and mechanical parts and a five- to 10-year warranty on fabric are essential.



## Green Living: A Plus For Our Planet

How green is your world? For some of us, the inconvenient truth is this: When it comes to “greening” our home, our lifestyle, our family and our pets, we are not always sure where to begin.

Here are some easy-to-embrace, eco-friendly tips. Try some. Try them all. We and the planet may be better for them.

One coffee cup? Two cereal bowls? Don’t put the dishwasher to work. Rinse and air dry. Run the energy-sapping dishwasher only when it’s full and on its energy-saver mode.

Take shorter showers and consider baths a special treat. Hot water heaters are a major energy drain. Insulate your water heater. Install low-flow shower heads - you’ll cut your water usage and water-heating costs.

Use more energy-efficient lighting throughout your home. Light-emitting diodes (LEDs) have come a long way and are often 10 times more efficient than compact fluorescents.

Choose pet products and pet health care providers who share your concern for the natural world. Chemical-free litter is especially suitable for people and pets with allergies and chemical sensitivities because it is silica dust-free.

Close down your computer at night. Hitting the off button is worth an average of \$90 of electricity a year. The Department of Energy recommends shutting off your monitor if you aren’t going to use it for more than 20 minutes, and the whole system if you’ll be offline for more than two hour.

One day each week, leave the car in the garage all day.

Our parents were on to something - when leaving a room, turn off the lights.

Drip. Drip. Drip. A leaky faucet can waste up to 20 gallons of water a day. A leaky toilet can flush an extra 200 gallons every day. Put six drops of food coloring in the tank. Wait ten minutes. If you find color in the bowl, you have a leaker.

Planning to build a new home or add on to your existing residence? Locate contractors who participate in green building programs.

Take a cue from our grandparents. Use natural resources to clean. Lemon juice and vinegar were powerful tools in the past.

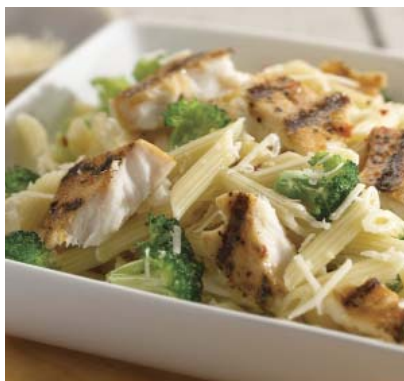
Get out the caulking gun, and weather strip your home.

Walk, bike or car pool whenever possible. You’ll save energy and burn a few extra calories.



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## Boost Your Health With Fish



There may be plenty of fish in the sea, but you could probably use a few more on your plate. Seafood - like shrimp, tilapia, and salmon - is brimming with nutrients. What really sets seafood apart from other healthy foods is that it’s a natural source of healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

Studies show that a diet containing omega-3s may decrease the risk of certain cancers, decrease blood pressure, reduce Alzheimer’s

symptoms, improve arthritis and joint pain, and promote heart health.

### Grilled Tilapia Broccoli Penne

Serves 2

2 Gorton’s Signature Grilled Tilapia Fillets

- 4 ounces whole wheat penne pasta
- 2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Prepare Gorton’s Signature Grilled Tilapia Fillets and pasta according to package instructions, and cut each fillet into four pieces. Heat oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium heat for two minutes and sauté onion and garlic five minutes, add broccoli, sauté seven minutes, add pasta and remove from heat. Combine remaining ingredients with broccoli mixture, arrange fish pieces over pasta and serve.