

For the past year, you've heard opinions about the changing real estate market. But as we keep saying, the real action happens at street level.

For instance, every once in a while, a buyer will come to us with the address of a house that he or she likes. Of course, we can't show them the home they're admiring unless the owners are selling. But it does give us a good idea what buyers are looking for.

We're letting you know this because you may know someone in the area that's thinking about selling. And we might know a buyer who would enjoy their home. If a friend, family member or associate is considering selling, please let them know we're here for them as negotiators and trusted advisors. We have the facts, stats and trends on hand to help them with the buying and selling plans.

Regards,

*Doug*

Office 403 247-5171

Fax 403 247-5326

*Value equals Knowledge Experience Advice*

dougmaccallum@remax.net




www.dougmaccallum.com

## Three For Three – Home Sales Up!

When it's your home, the right way to establish value is with strong consideration of the macro economics within our neighbourhood. And trends are important, especially emerging trends, so we have a big picture - wide market overview.

Yes, the economy's been on a bender. But now, all in tandem, three reports from across North America indicate that a new, positive trend is emerging.

The number of homes sold across Canada has seen a dramatic 3 month increase, as reported by CREA. Take a look at this month's chart. Yes, maybe the month-over-month jumps reflect the time of year - spring market. But for the past 12 months, buyers have been watching from the sidelines and that's created some pent up demand. Today's buyers are taking advantage of:

-  **Increased affordability** – prices that have floated down without crashing
-  **Increased purchasing power** - lower interest rates
-  **Government tax incentives**

And CMHC surprised itself just this month, announcing that housing starts for May beat their own projections – by 10,000 units.

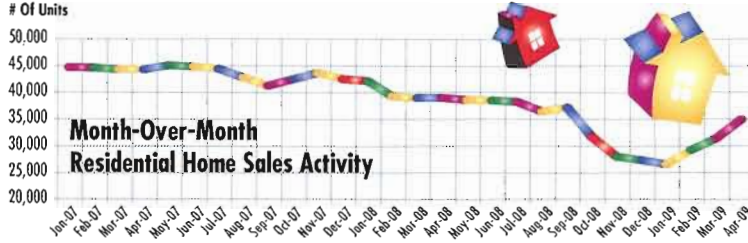
Even in the US, where many have pointed the finger as the start of this economic climate, there are signs of a stabilizing housing market – with month-over-month increases in the number of homes sold during the same 3 month period.

The “professors” on both sides of the border tell us we're not out of the woods yet, but there's a majority of them saying the worst is likely behind us.

## Home Sales Jump! And Jump! And Jump!

The average price of Canadian homes has drifted lower over the past year. And there's been a lot of watching and waiting in the market. Now, we're watching market sales numbers climb!

MLS® home sales have experienced dramatic gains for 3 consecutive months, with April activity leaping 11.2%. This is the largest month-to-month growth in sales in more than five years. The April increase builds on gains of 10.3% in February and 7.7% in March.



SOURCE: The Canadian Real Estate Association. Seasonally adjusted activity.

## We Did It As Kids

Our folks always said, "don't drink from the garden hose, it has germs..." True, garden hoses could carry scary bacteria. But did you also know that a garden hose can contain high levels of lead. That's right, lead. Many hoses are made of poly-vinyl chloride and use lead as a stabilizer in the plastic. Tests show lead can leach from the hose into the water. Plus, the brass fitting on the hose can also give off lead as brass is manufactured with lead.

Check the packaging when you buy a garden hose, as some now carry a lead-free label. These hoses are usually made of rubber or medical-grade vinyl. President's Choice® offers a "completely lead-free" rubber garden hose.

## Energy-Saving Air Conditioner Innovations

If getting ready for the summer heat has you shopping for a new or replacement AC system, here are four features that will also keep your energy bill cool.

**Reversible mode.** The AC unit works like a heat pump, drawing warm air from outside into your home. This reversible air conditioner can serve as a back-up heating system in the spring and fall – when the outside temperature is above 7°C.

**Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER).** Look for a unit with a minimum SEER ratio of 12. Better yet, opt for an Energy Star model, which consumes at least 20 percent less energy than a conventional unit.

**Inverter technology.** While a conventional air conditioner shuts off when it reaches the set temperature, this type of AC unit stays on but regulates compressor speed so the unit operates continuously – with no costly peak consumption periods.

**Dual compressors.** When the desired temperature is reached, the primary compressor shuts off and the secondary compressor takes over. Its lower consumption ratio equals energy savings.

## Click For Green Savings

Retrofit, Renovation, or Green Project, see if you qualify for rebates, incentives, or grants offered by the federal and/ or provincial governments.

Office of Energy Efficiency: [www.oeo.nrcan.gc.ca](http://www.oeo.nrcan.gc.ca) (Click "Initiatives")  
 Environment Canada: [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca) (Scroll down and you'll find information on Incentives & Rebates in the "Take Action" section.)

And get details on renovation tax credits from Canada Revenue Agency at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca)

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## Doug – Your Real Estate Connection

You know us for great service.

*Your recommendation reflects well when you introduce us to someone who is buying or selling. You already know we work methodically to help make dreams a reality.*

*Think of us as your friends in real estate.  
Thank you for your confidence.*



**Doug+Roz**  
**MacCallum**  
Realtors®

office: **403 247-5171**

[dougmaccallum@remax.net](mailto:dougmaccallum@remax.net)

[www.dougmaccallum.com](http://www.dougmaccallum.com)

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4625 Varsity Dr. NW 222  
Calgary, AB T3A 0Z9

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