

# Over the Fence

NEWS FROM YOUR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL...



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## Pool Safety

Pools and spas can be lots of fun. But they can also be very dangerous, especially to children. The Home Safety Council encourages families to follow the safety steps below to avoid injuries in and around pools and spas.

- When children are in or near the water, a grownup should watch them very carefully. Do not take your eyes off them. Older children should not be left in charge of younger children in the pool area.
- If you have a pool or spa, install a fence that goes all the way around it. The fence should close and latch by itself. It should be at least five feet high.
- Always keep gates closed and latched. Never prop a gate open.
- Do not leave furniture near the fence that would enable a child to climb over it.
- Keep the pool area clear of things you could trip on.
- Keep a cordless, water resistant telephone with emergency numbers posted in the pool area.
- Keep poolside rescue equipment close by. Equipment should include a rescue

pole measuring at least 10-12 feet and a ring buoy with line. Do not allow children to play with these tools.

- Keep a life vest approved by the U.S. Coast Guard on hand. Anyone who is not a good swimmer should wear a vest.
- Use plastic instead of glassware in the pool area.
- For extra safety, use a pool alarm to alert you if someone falls into the pool. Recent studies show that sub surface pool alarms are most effective. These alarms are not substitutes for adult supervision of children.
- Keep spas and hot tubs covered and locked when not in use.
- Remove excess water from pool and spa covers.
- Completely remove pool and spa covers before anyone gets in.
- Chlorine-based pool care products can explode and catch on fire. Always follow manufacturer's instructions when using pool chemicals and store chemicals in a dry place away from heat sources.
- Lock all pool chemicals in a secure cabinet out of children's reach.

[www.homesafetycouncil.org/SafetyGuide/sg\\_water\\_w002.asp](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/SafetyGuide/sg_water_w002.asp)



## Summer Cooling Tips

- Set your thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The less difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be.
- Don't set your thermostat at a colder setting than normal when you turn on your air conditioner. It will not cool your home any faster and could result in excessive cooling and, therefore, unnecessary expense.
- Don't place lamps or TV sets near your air conditioning thermostat. The thermostat senses heat from these appliances, which can cause the air conditioner to run longer than necessary.
- Plant trees or shrubs to shade air conditioning units but not to block the airflow. Place your room air conditioner on the north side of the house. A unit operating in the shade uses as much as 10% less electricity than the same one operating in the sun.
- Keep in mind that insulation and sealing air leaks will help your energy performance in the summertime by keeping the cool air inside.





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## How to Maintain Your Central Air Conditioner

Besides changing an air filter once a month, central air doesn’t require much in the way of maintenance. By following the steps below you may be able to avoid future repair bills. Remember to check the manufacturer’s instructions before starting any maintenance and remember to turn the unit OFF.

- **Clean or change air filter** (once a month). The air filter is the most important part of your cooling system. If it becomes clogged, then your system will have to work harder and longer to supply the same amount of cool air.
- **Clean indoor coil** (once a year). A dirty coil will hinder the unit’s ability to cool the air moving through the unit. This makes the unit work harder, wasting energy and money.
- **Brush and vacuum the fan blades and fan enclosure area** (once a year) to keep your air conditioner running at maximum efficiency.
- **Keep outdoor condenser unit free from debris** (as needed). Anything obstructing the unit will prevent it from dissipating heat as effectively, making the unit work harder. This wastes energy and money.

## June is National Ice Tea Month... Celebrate with New Twists on an Old Favorite!

### RASPBERRY ICED TEA

**Ingredients:**

- 1 gallon water
- 3 (3 ounce) large tea bags
- 1 cup fresh raspberries
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup powdered lemonade mix (such as Country Time®)
- Ice cubes

**Directions:**

Bring the water to a boil in a large pot, and stir in the tea bags, raspberries, and sugar until the sugar has dissolved. Allow the mixture to steep until the desired level of tea flavor is reached, 3 to 5 minutes; remove tea bags, and stir in the lemonade mix until dissolved. Pour tea into pitchers, and add ice to cool.

### SWEET LIME ICED TEA

**Ingredients:**

- 1 gallon boiling water
- 6 black tea bags
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 4 limes, juiced

**Directions:**

Pour the water into a gallon sized jar over the tea bags. Allow to steep for 45 minutes. Remove and discard the tea bags. Stir in the sugar and lime juice until the sugar has dissolved. Cool to room temperature; refrigerate until cold before serving.

