

Oakville Beaver - Real Estate

Today's future-savvy house hunters

FRANCES WEDLAKE



About Your Home

One hundred years ago, electricity in a home was quite the selling feature. Nowadays, "All Mod Cons" means a lot more than basic utilities and a washing machine. Canadian home owners in the new century face an information-hungry world of dwindling natural resources and increasingly expensive energy. Homes that have been built, restored and renovated to reflect these changes are more likely to find a ready market. Some buyers are already getting future-savvy and are asking these questions:

How wired are you?

This has become an essential question for any home-hunter. Being "connected" is going to be part of human existence from now on. Potential buyers used to look in kitchens to see if there were sufficient electrical outlets. Now they want to see where they can plug in their computers. With a generation of computer-raised kids coming of age, buyers are going to be looking for new century homes that have electrical, phone and cable outlets in almost every room.

What are your recycling facilities like?

Garbage disposal in the new century will be focused on one activity: recycling. With speculation that fees may be imposed

for domestic garbage collection, it will be in every household's interest to reduce the volume of their garbage and to increase the amount of recyclable materials they put out for collection. Recycling should be easy, so look for a home that has sufficient space to easily store paper, glass, aluminum and plastic items prior to being picked up or taken to a central recycling location.

If you are looking for a home with a garden, bear in mind that almost all food waste is suitable for disposal in a composter. Some municipalities even provide odourless indoor compost kits in which worms do all the work by reducing food waste to nutritious mulch suitable for indoor plants!

Do you have any solar panels?

A home with solar panels can mean significantly lower energy bills, so don't hesitate to ask current homeowners about their monthly expenses. Using solar power as an alternative energy source is not just for tropical climates. Solar panels can be used effectively year round in Canada to augment existing sources of power. Flexible solar panels are now so technologically advanced that they can harness power from the sun and from any available light on cloudy days. Solar panels are expensive, but as energy costs for your home are likely to increase in the future, these panels are becoming increasingly cost-effective. Solar water heating panels are also a worthwhile addition to a new home. They comprise rows of thin tubes that can be placed on a south-facing wall or roof for maximum exposure to light and solar heat. These panels use a heat exchange process to concentrate solar radiation into thermal energy which is then transferred to the heating coil in your water system. Like solar power panels, they will eventually pay for themselves.

How good is your water supply and how much do you use?

Water quality and water conservation will gain increasing attention at the start of the new century. The popularity of bottled water indicates that many homeowners are already unhappy with the quality of the drinking water supplied by their local utility. Ask if the seller uses a filter on their faucet or if there is a built-in water filtration system attached to the drinking water supply pipe or tank. Utility-supplied water is likely to become increasingly expensive so check showerheads, the washing machine and water closets to find out if they are designed to use water economically.

If you are looking for a home today, be forward-looking and keep these features in mind - they may be just what you need in the near future. When you sit down with your real estate agent to determine what you want in a home, think ahead and add a few items to your checklist of requirements. "All Mod Cons" has a whole new meaning! Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this article. However, the information provided is general in nature and those with specific questions should seek professional advice that meets their particular requirements. Francis Wedlake is a sales representative with Royal LePage Lakeshore Road office. She can be reached at (905) 845-4267, or email sales@rlsouth.re.net.

Winterize a sunroom

(MASI)-Enclosing a porch or sun room for year-round use makes a lot of sense because the room is already under roof. Many porches offer conversion possibilities that expand living space. Depending on the condition of the porch you might have to hire a contractor to do part of the job.

Planning the job

Check out the foundation underneath the porch to appraise its construction and condition. Use a flashlight and make a sketch of what's down there. Note the size and direction and spacing between floor joists and the spans of main beams which bear the full load of the floor joists. Code specifications vary but 2x6 floor joists on 16-inch centers should be considered minimum. Also, check the location of key footings and posts and look for signs of wood rot or pest damage which will require repair and replacement work. If the structure is questionable, call in an engineer or contractor for advice.

Look for electric lines and heating ducts running from the basement or crawl space adjacent to the porch. If these lines are in the vicinity of the porch, the conversion will be easier and less costly.

Rough construction
Empty the space of any furnishings and pull down the ceiling and walls using a pry bar to expose the wall and ceiling framing. Add fiberglass insulation between the ceiling and wall framing.

Replace old porch windows with new vinyl-clad insulated glass double-hung windows. Tuck insulation scraps around the new window frames. Hire an electrician to install about 10 feet of electric baseboard heat. Finish the porch with 1/2-inch dry-wall on the ceiling and walls. Decorate with paint and wallpaper and wall-to-wall carpeting of your choice. For more valuable house maintenance advice, log on to www.house-net.com.



KATE VANDERBURGH
sales representative

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Happy New Year to all my
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I look forward to serving
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new century!

Kate



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**BEAUTIFUL BURLINGTON
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\$134,900. Wonderful family complex in sought after North Burlington! Spacious open concept, cathedral ceiling in living room with walk-out to deck overlooking courtyard! Master bedroom loft style overlooks living room. Eat-in kit with lots of cupboards & counter space, window seat! Single car garage provides extra storage area! KATE* 849-3357



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\$214,900. A real gem in the "Village of Bronte!" Large premium lot with double drive, new roof and mostly new windows! Updated recreation room with fireplace and 3-pce bath with ceramics! Large, bright eat-in kitchen! It won't last long at this price, so don't delay! KATE* 849-3357

LAKEFRONT LIFESTYLE IN DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE!



\$404,900. Exquisite 2 bdrm condo! Elegant decor, approx. 1627 sq.ft. with 2 terraces to capture the view of harbour, lake & escarpment! "The Granary" is Oakville's most prestigious condominium and the unit has plenty to offer. B/I appliances, French doors, ceramics, marble & a fireplace! 2 parking spots. KATE* 849-3357



PREMIUM RAVINE LOT!

\$209,900. Incredible frehold townhome in desirable neighbourhood. Designer decor thru out. Eat-in kitchen with walk out to deck where you will enjoy the breathtaking ravine view. Main flr fam. rm w/whew gas fireplace! Mstr w/4pc ensuite, professionally fin. bsmt! Set amongst detached homes, walk to schools & park! KATE* 849-3357



VILLAGE OF MORRISON

\$165,900. Luxury River Oaks condo T/H! Approx. 1550 sq.ft. with ravine views from most windows. Main floor family room, plus walk out, stunning eat-in kit w/ceramics, extra pantry + breakfast bar. Fabulous roof top terrace plus 2 parking spots. Fantastic value! KATE* 849-3357

The Inside FRONT PAGE

An Oakville Beaver Real Estate Feature

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\$249,900

GREAT VALUE!

5 level split with large principal rooms. 2 full baths, 2 powder rooms 3 + 2 bed. Home is finished on all 5 levels. Great nanny suite! All new windows, laundry on main level. Quiet location, backing onto park, good size yard. Walking distance to both schools. Call Helen Danko today!



HELEN DANKO
Sales Representative

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