



NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF TARRYTOWN AND DEEP EDDY

FEBRUARY 2019

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

Prevent Oak Wilt - Don't Prune Oaks Feb 1st - June 30th

Information provided by Travis County Transportation & Natural Resources

Oak wilt has claimed the lives of thousands of trees in Central Texas and beyond. Majestic oaks play a large role in this region's beauty and identity; it would be hard to imagine the Hill Country without them. They are an iconic part of many local businesses and neighborhoods, providing shade, beauty, and higher property values. Following simple preventive measures can go a long way towards stopping the spread of this destructive disease.

From February through June, avoid all pruning or cutting of oaks – this is the high season for oak wilt transmission. Any wounds that occur from construction, vehicles, wind, etc., should be painted as soon as they're discovered – ideally within ½ hour of being cut – with commercial tree wound dressing or latex paint. That includes freshly cut stumps and surface roots.

Pruning is least risky during the coldest winter days and extended hot periods in mid to late summer. Any time you prune though, the Texas Forest Service recommends painting all wounds and sanitizing pruning equipment between trees using denatured methyl alcohol (shellac thinner), isopropyl alcohol, or a general purpose household disinfectant such as Lysol, Listerine or Pine-Sol. Household bleach is not recommended.

Red oaks, including Spanish (now Buckley) oak, Shumard oak and blackjack oak, are very susceptible to oak wilt and play a key role in the disease's transmission. Oak wilt is caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, which spreads its spores from "fungal mats" that form under the tree's bark. These mats have a sweet, fruity smell that attracts insects, especially the sap-sucking nitidulid beetle. After feeding and breeding on the fungal mats, these beetles fly away covered in fungal spores. As they visit other oaks, they spread the fungus through open wounds in the bark. The nitidulid beetle is only about the size of a pinhead, but is capable of flying as far as a mile away. While red oaks are the most susceptible to oak wilt, all oaks can become infected.

Fungal mats usually form on standing trees, but can also develop on logs, stumps and fresh firewood cut from infected

oaks. Make sure to remove and either burn or bury infected oaks to prevent mats from forming, and never store unseasoned wood from infected trees near healthy oaks.



The second way oak wilt can be transmitted is through the roots. Live oaks tend to grow together in dense mottes with interconnected roots, so the fungus can be transmitted easily among them. Oak wilt is occasionally transmitted through red oak roots as well, but the movement is slower and occurs over shorter distances than with live oaks. Root transmission can be prevented by cutting trenches four feet deep between infected and healthy trees, but by far the best option is to prevent infection in the first place.

So make sure NOT to prune oaks between February 1 and July 1, and ALWAYS paint wounds on oaks no matter what time of year it is. For more information on preventing and treating oak wilt, please visit texasoakwilt.org, the website of The Oak Wilt Information Partnership, a project of the Texas A&M Forest Service, the Forest Health Protection Branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin.

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THE RIGHT START: TAKING A HARD LOOK AT PRESCHOOLS AND DAYCARES

by Sugandha Jain

Most parents think they can spot a poor quality preschool or childcare center. But the fact is, parents are woefully in the dark when it comes to making this kind of judgment.

“Parents cannot assess quality directly,” says Dr. Suzanne Helburn, Professor Emerita of Economics at the University of Colorado, Denver and co-author of the book *America’s Child Care Problem*. “So [some things] are subject to cost cutting strategies by providers whose quality looks good to parents, but who skimp on practices that affect quality that parents cannot readily observe.”

Studies by both the RAND corporation and the Cost and Quality Project bear this out. Both studies found that parents tended to overestimate the quality of care at daycare centers. Indeed, in the Cost and Quality Project study, many parents rated their child’s daycare or preschool as “very high” quality. But when trained observers rated the same centers, the results were “poor” or “mediocre”.

That’s because a typical parent judges a daycare center or preschool on whether the site is safe, clean, and in their budget rather than on how well the center provides emotional care and intellectual stimulation.

To figure that out, you have to look at the staff. And that’s the place most centers skimp.

Before enrolling your child in any daycare center or preschool, you should ask how much education the teachers have, how long they’ve been with the school or center, and how much they are paid. It’s also important to know whether the center offers health care or other benefits to its staff. If most of the tuition is being used to pay staff salaries and benefits, then the program is likely to attract and retain qualified staff.

Licensing vs. Accreditation

Once you’ve determined whether a preschool or daycare center has educated, well paid teachers, you should ask about its accreditation. A lot of childcare centers will tout the fact that they are “licensed.” This doesn’t mean anything.

“Licensing of child care is a foundation, and basically it is a permission to operate,” says Dr. Diane Adams, a senior lecturer and project manager at the Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership. “Licensing is not the same as meeting high quality standards, such as accreditation.”

When it comes to early childhood education, the gold standard is accreditation by the NAEYC. The NAEYC requires accredited centers and preschools to adhere to strict quality guidelines. The list is long and involved, and includes everything from low child-to-teacher ratios, age-appropriate curriculum, suitable furnishings, and even what kind of food can be served to children. Schools that receive NAEYC accreditation demonstrate to parents that they strive to provide a high quality environment for children.

Check ‘Em Out

It goes without saying that you should visit a daycare center or preschool before placing your child in it. But dispassionately evaluating a center can be nearly impossible for most parents.

“Selecting a child care center is very much like the process of selecting

(Continued on Page 3)

(Continued from Page 2)

a college for a graduating senior,” says Dr. Adams, “except not nearly enough comparative information is available.”

For this reason, parents can be easily wowed by things like classroom activities or worksheets. To avoid this, ask what a typical day looks like for the children—and how much time teachers have to prepare and plan for it. Also take a good, long look around: What are the kids on the playground doing? What are the teachers doing? How are children engaged in learning?

“A daycare [or preschool] should be a vibrant, lively place, and children should be talking, laughing and having fun,” says Chris Van Deusen of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. “However, it shouldn’t be chaotic—the adults should be running the place, and it should be clear who is in charge.”

Once you’ve chosen a reliable preschool or daycare center, stop by periodically during the day—unannounced—to ensure that your child is being well cared for (reject centers or preschools that do not allow you to pop in whenever you want). If you notice anything amiss, you should immediately report it to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Choosing a good daycare center or preschool is a lot of work. And, in the end, you get what you pay for.

“In 1985, I chose to drive a 10-year-old car so I could pay a little more for child care tuition,” says Dawn Leach, director of the Austin Community College Children’s Lab School. “I have never regretted that choice.”

Sugandha Jain is the Educational Director of The Goddard School.



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The Value of Sleep for Children and Teens

Shelley Coleman M.A., L.P.C.-S.

As important as food and water, sleep is vital to your well-being. And, if you are a parent, research shows that your children are not getting the sleep they need. According to the National Sleep Foundation, children (ages 6-13) require 9-11 hours of sleep per night and adolescents (ages 13-18) require 9-10 hours per night. A recent study from the Centers for Disease Control found that 31% of teens get 8 hours or less of sleep per night and most school age children are getting 8.5 hours.

For growing brains and bodies, not getting enough sleep can have consequences on school and relationships. Teens and children can have difficulty concentrating when sleep deprived. And, according to the Sleep Disorder's Center, approximately 1,550 people are killed annually in crashes related to drowsy driving. Often, these crashes are caused by young people under the age of 25.

On the contrary, quality sleep has been linked to improved attention, better mental health, and lower risk of obesity. In recognizing the importance of quality sleep, parents can help children establish healthy sleep habits at an early age. If healthy sleep hygiene is established in adolescents, those habits can carry into adulthood.

Healthy sleep habits for teens and children include:

- a set bedtime and wake time that does not vary by more than 2

hours on the weekend

- a relaxing bedtime routine such as reading for teens or story time for children
- no "exciting" activities at bedtime such as jumping or wrestling for children or computer games for teens
- daily exercise
- healthy diet
- no caffeine after 4 PM

If you think your teen or child may have a sleep issue, there are common symptoms you may notice. For adolescents, parents may have difficulty waking them in the morning or observe that their teen is irritable in the early afternoon. Children may require excessive "help" falling asleep, wake many times during the night, or cause their parents to lose sleep. While these symptoms are usually easily addressed by improving sleep habits, more severe symptoms should be addressed with the help of a pediatrician or behavior specialist.

As parents, the value that we place on sleep is a big influence on our children's attitude toward sleep. Fortunately, there are a lot of practical steps we can take to help our children get the sleep they need. There are too many benefits of good sleep for our teens and children to miss out on them.

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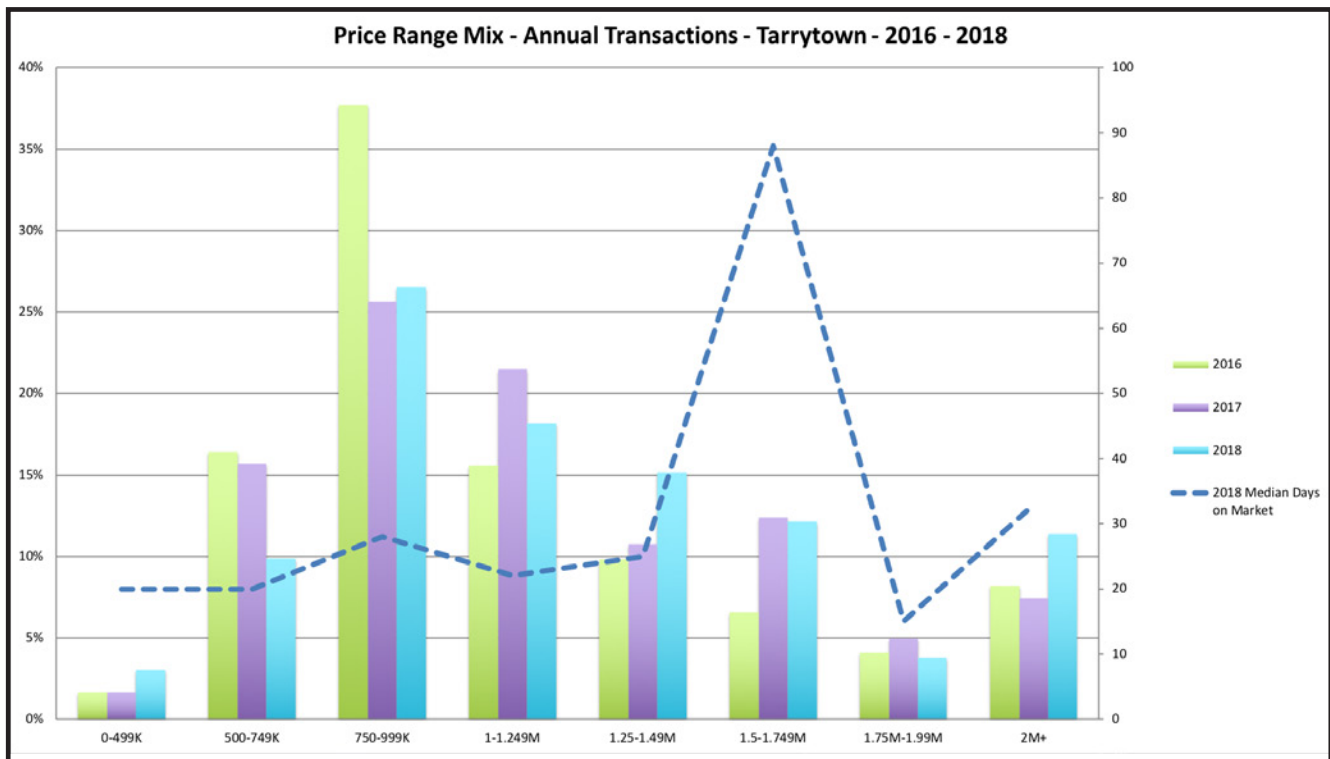
TARRYTOWN REAL ESTATE market report update

February
2019

by **Trey McWhorter**

I put this together last February and got good feedback on it so am updating to show 2018 numbers and show the trends in different price ranges. Some highlights:

- The sub-500K market is almost completely gone in Tarrytown, but did register 4 sales earlier in the year, all of which were snapped up quickly
- The biggest change from 2017 to 2018 was in the 500-749K sales, which dropped from 16% of the total transactions down to 10%
- The other big change was in the \$2M+ sales, which increased from 7% to 11% of total sales
- And median days on market was below 90 days for all price bands, and under 30 days for all but the \$1.5 - \$1.749M and \$2M+ homes



Please let me know if you have any questions you'd like me to answer for 2019. If you want to make sense of what's going on in the market, or would like a better understanding of what your own home is worth, please contact me and I'd be happy to help you.

Note: All data comes from the Austin Board of Realtors' MLS report, reflecting activity through December 31, 2018.

ACUPUNCTURE

By: Yunguang Yang (Lily), Licensed Acupuncturist & Herbalist, MAOM, Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) are safe, effective and drug-free options for the treatment of most non-emergency medical conditions. Whether you're new to acupuncture or have years of experience, acupuncture can help your general health.

What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a form of treatment involving the use of very fine filiform needles that are inserted into certain specific points of the body. This stimulates the body to increase circulation and activate the body's own natural healing process. Acupuncture can be used to treat a wide range of conditions and illnesses and is a wonderful option when western medication does not work or is not tolerated.

What to expect?

Acupuncturists often use additional techniques, such as tui-na, cupping and moxibustion, in conjunction with acupuncture. Tui-na is a form of Chinese manipulative therapy, consisting of massage, acupressure and other forms of body manipulation. It works by applying pressure to acupoints, meridians and muscles or nerves to remove blockages that prevent free flow of Qi (energy) through the body. Cupping involves the use of glass globes placed on the body to create a suction effect. The vacuum effect that draws up the skin is believed to open up the skin's pores to stimulate the blood flow to the muscles, balance and realign the flow of Qi. Cupping may result in small, circular bruises in the area where the cups were applied, but these bruises are usually painless and disappear within a few days after the treatment. You may have seen these cupping marks on the back of the Chinese Olympic swimmer Wang Qun at the Beijing Olympics in 2008! Finally, moxibustion is a traditional therapy that involves the burning of moxa made from dried mugwort, a soft and wooly herb, to penetrate to a deeper level of the body. Moxibustion has been used throughout Asia for thousands of years; in fact, the actual Chinese character for acupuncture, translated literally, means "acupuncture-moxibustion".

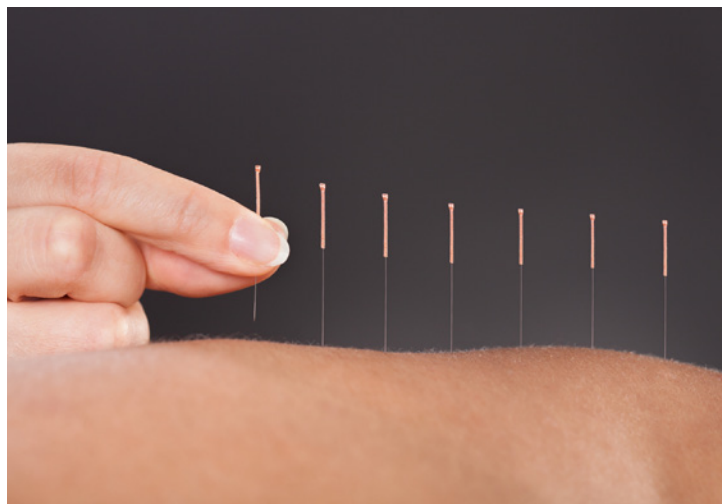
What about herbal medicine?

Chinese herbal medicine refers to the use of a plant's seeds, berries, roots, leaves, bark or flowers for medicinal purposes. Traditionally,

this involves formulating a mixture of various herbs to create a formula based on a patient's specific needs. These herbs can be taken in the form of herbal tea after boiling the herbs in hot water to extract the active ingredients. Although herbal medicine is still widely used and available, formulations in the form of tablets or capsules are more convenient and have become more popular these days.

What conditions can be treated?

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is most commonly used to treat pain caused by various illnesses such as arthritis, bursitis, fibromyalgia and PMS. It can be very effective for treating migraine, back pain, neck pain, frozen shoulder and sciatica. Acupuncture can also achieve good results when treating stress related problems such as insomnia, anxiety and depression. It is an effective way to treat substance abuse, reduce substance dependencies (e.g. pain killers) or help you to quit smoking or reduce weight. Acupuncture may also be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation or surgical intervention to hasten functional recovery. Talk to your licensed Acupuncturist about what acupuncture and TCM can do for you. Please refer to the Classical Ads of this newsletter for our detailed information or visit www.amaranthacupuncture.com.



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NATURE WATCH

CHORUS OF THE CRANES

by Jim and Lynne Weber

*Adult Sandhill Crane*

A sure sign that spring is on the way is the sound of loud, rolling, rattling calls of migrating Sandhill Cranes (*Antigone canadensis*) as they fly overhead. High above, their V formation is sometimes barely visible due to their travel at up to 12,000 feet in elevation. Large flocks of these cranes can travel up to 500 miles in one day, destined for their breeding grounds in the northern US states and into Alaska and Canada.

Sandhill cranes are large, tall birds with slate gray feather often tinged with a rusty wash, crimson caps, long necks and legs, and a short tail covered in a drooping feather 'bustle.' Adults grow to be 4 feet tall with almost 80-inch wingspans. While often described as gangly, they are known for their graceful and energetic dancing displays, where they stretch their wings, pump their heads, and bow and leap to attract a mate. Sandhill cranes mate for life, which can be as long as two or three decades, and they stay with their mates year-round. They defend themselves from aerial predators by jumping and kicking, and from land predators by hissing with wings open and performing stabbing motions with their pointed bills.

While sandhill cranes breed and forage in open prairies, grasslands, and wetlands, they prefer places with standing water. They generally begin arriving in Texas in November, and spend their days feeding in irrigated croplands and wetlands, and roosting on shallow lakes or rivers at night. By early February, these birds are ready to start their journey north to their breeding grounds.

The sandhill cranes that winter in Texas have often traveled 3,000 miles or more, and their return journey north is fueled by their omnivorous diet of seeds, grains, berries, tubers, amphibians, insects, and small rodents. Congregating at both fall and spring migration and at winter sites, groups of these birds can number into the thousands.

The unique tone of the sandhill crane's call is a product of their anatomy. Their long tracheas or windpipes coil into their sternum and help to produce sounds with a lower pitch and rich harmonics, which is often amplified by their habit of traveling in numbers. While it is this distinct rattling, croaking sound that accompanies their journeys, these cranes can also communicate by making moaning, hissing, purring, snoring, and trilling sounds.

As markers of seasonal change, sandhill cranes are among the most ancient of the world's birds. A crane fossil, identical to the structure to the modern sandhill crane, was discovered in Nebraska and estimated to be several million years old. Watching large flocks of these birds gather at night or take flight at dawn, is a wondrous sight. Hearing the chorus of the cranes as they migrate overhead tells us that spring is on the way!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, check out our books, *Nature Watch Austin*, *Nature Watch Big Bend*, and *Native Host Plants for Texas Butterflies* (all published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.

To view the Nature Watch article go to Peelinc.com and click on Jester Warbler February 2019.

*Flying Sandhill Cranes*

Flooding: How to Protect Your Family & Finances

In many areas, flooding is the most common and costly natural disaster—and it can happen here. Just one inch of water in your home or office can cost thousands of dollars in cleanup and replacement costs, including drywall, baseboards, floor coverings and furniture. You may think you're covered, but many homeowners' insurance policies do not cover flooding.

Here are several reasons to talk to an insurance agent now about flood insurance.

- There is usually a 30-day waiting period before coverage begins.
- Coverage is relatively inexpensive.
- Renters can buy flood insurance for personal belongings or business inventory.
- Basement coverage includes cleanup expense and repair or replacement of items such as furnaces, water heaters, washers, dryers, air conditioners, freezers and pumps.
- You do not have to repay flood insurance benefits as you do with disaster-related assistance loans.
- You can receive payments for flood-related losses even if no disaster was declared.

Learn more about flood insurance at www.floodsmart.gov.

There are things you can do to prepare your home and family now for flash floods:

- Make a family emergency plan. Emergency preparedness is everyone's responsibility. Write down your plan. Decide ahead of time where you will go if you have to leave and where family members will meet up. Identify an out-of-town emergency contact.
- Get supplies for an emergency kit. Start with three days' water and three days' packaged and canned food. Add a battery-powered radio and extra batteries. Store in waterproof containers with wheels or that you can lift so you can take them with you. For details about preparing an emergency kit, visit www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/floods.html
- Stay informed about what could happen. During storm season, listen to local media for up-to-date reports on weather watches and warnings. Keep a battery-powered portable radio—with a NOAA weather band—handy in case the power goes out. Choose one.

Learn more about preparedness at www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/floods.html.



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Flour Beetles

— Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service



There are two types of flour beetles that may be encountered in the home—red and confused. These beetles are small (about 1/8" in length), reddish-brown to brown in color with a somewhat flattened body. Adults can be long-lived and survive up to 3 years.

To tell the difference between the two, you would need to look closely at the tip of the antennae; red flour beetles have a distinct 3-segmented club while confused flour beetles have a gradually formed 4-segmented club. Fortunately, you don't really need to get that detailed in identification to manage them as they feed on similar foods and are often found in the same areas.

Flour beetles feed on grain dust and milled grains, but can also feed on undamaged grains. In homes they may be found in cereals, flour, pasta, dried beans, chocolate, nuts, herbs, spices, crackers, dried pet food, dried flowers and cake mix. With large populations of the insects, they may cause a foul taste and odor to infested products due to a secretion from their scent glands.

Red flour beetles are able to fly while confused flour beetles cannot, so it is possible for them to move to different areas of the house. If you are having a problem with flour beetles, but cannot locate the source in your pantry, check other areas of the home such as where pet food is stored or areas with dried flowers or potpourri. Sometimes people see flour beetles during or after they have had a rodent infestation because the beetles can eat grain that may be in rodent baits or eat food from rodent nests where food was stored.

Management tips:

- Inspect all food items and get rid of anything infested. If you do not want to throw away infested food, you can either put it in the freezer for a week or heat it in the oven at 200 degrees for 2-3 hours to kill off insects.
- Clean all pantry areas, making sure to get any grain dust out of cracks and crevices. Use a cleaning solution after all debris is removed. Seal any cracks where grain dust may accumulate with a sealant product.
- Do not buy damaged or expired items from the grocery store.
- Use products promptly. If you go away for a period of time (a week or more), store items in the freezer.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

This work is supported by Crops Protection and Pest Management Competitive Grants Program [grant no. 2017-70006-27188 /project accession no. 1013905] from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Ways to Clean Oil off a Driveway

Cat Litter

Put cat litter on the stain and rub it in.
Let it sit for a while, then, sweep the cat litter up.
Repeat at least once.

Peat Moss

Spread peat moss on the stain. Roll it over the stain.

Simple Green

Pour lots of Simple Green on the stain. Let the spot soak for a few hours. Wipe/rinse the area.

Liquid Tide

Cover the area with liquid Tide.
Pour ¼ cup of water on top of the Tide.
Use an old broom to scrub the area for about 5 minutes.
Wipe down the area and/or rinse it with a hose.
Repeat if necessary.

Oil-Removal Product

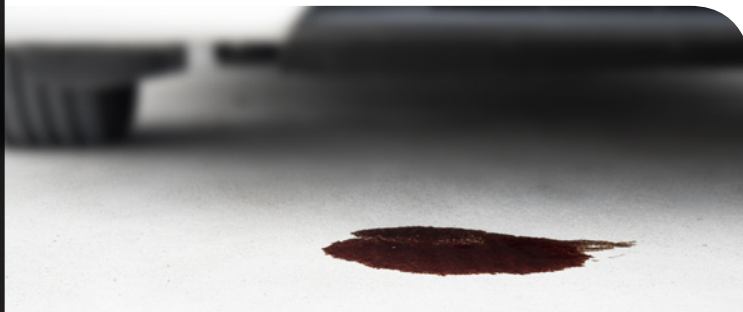
Go to local hardware store and ask for a product that will clean up the oil. Pour oil cleaner on the ground, rub a little with a rag and let it vaporize. Repeat if necessary.

Oxy Clean Laundry Spray

Spray generously with Oxy Clean laundry spray.
Let this stand for a few minutes. Scrub with a stiff brush.
Wipe with a paper towel or flush with hose.

Pour N Restore

Pour this white liquid on the oil stain.
Let it dry into a powder and brush the powder away.



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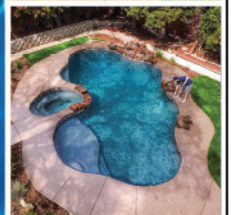
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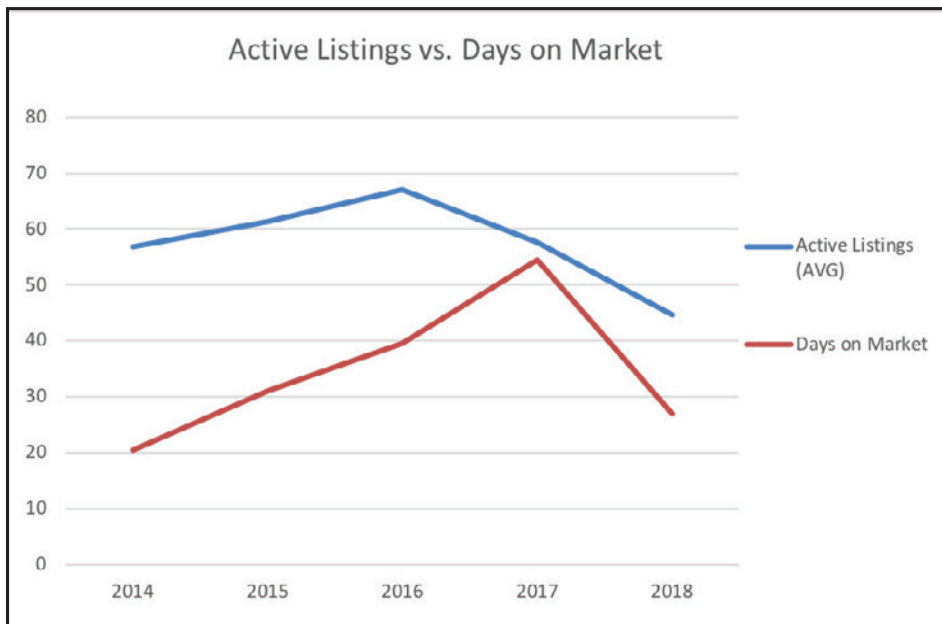
TRY



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5 Tips to Get Your House Ready to Sell

- De-personalize and remove clutter
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- Odor control (pets, smoking, old carpet)
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