



# Craig Watson

Sales Representative



*'Helping You,  
Your Family,  
Your Friends'*

905 **545.1188** [www.craigwatson.ca](http://www.craigwatson.ca)



*My business continues to grow because of clients like you.*

*The referral of your family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers is important to me and I appreciate it.*

*Thank You for your trust and continued support.*

*Craig*

## HOME FIRE DRILLS

Suppose you've just heard a smoke alarm...*what would you do? What would your children do?* From the time the smoke alarm sounds until the fire is out of control you may have only minutes, or seconds, to get out. Many people make poor decisions when fire breaks out. They may be affected by smoke, disoriented by being awakened abruptly, and frightened. But, more often, poor decisions occur because people have not planned or practised what to do in the case of a fire. **Be Safe...be prepared.**

### You can survive a Fire if you...

- have working smoke alarms
- make and practise an escape plan
- stay out when you get out

### Create an Escape Plan - and Practise

- Review two possible exits - and how to use them - from each room in the house. Walk through the primary and alternative escape routes, making sure all exits are accessible to all members of your household.

Keep these exits in mind as you decorate your home for the holiday season.



- In the case of a fire, everyone must be prepared to move quickly, carefully and calmly. Don't let your drills

become a race; make sure everyone knows exactly what to do. Don't run.

- Figure out how to use each window as an exit (is there a garage roof or other surface below? A tree nearby? Do you need an escape ladder?).

- Determine which family members might need help escaping.

- Ensure that everyone knows to use the second exits when the first ones cannot be used. During your 'practise' fire drills, vary your route, pretend that some escape routes are blocked - which could very well be the case during the holiday season.

- Since many fatal home fires start when people are asleep, practise your escape plan having each member of your family wait in his or her sleeping area for the sound of the alarm. Start by coaching your children, but remember, your goal is to teach them to escape *without* your help.

- Practise your escape plan with everyone in the house; in daylight and after dark. Practise your escape plan at least twice a year. And, it's a good idea to have an extra practise once you've decorated for the holiday season - perhaps furniture has been repositioned, or an exit blocked?

- As things change in your home, ensure that they are factored into your escape plan.

- Establish an outside meeting place - is it the same place winter and summer?

- Call 911 from a neighbours. During a fire, *do not* go back into your home to attempt to rescue people or pets.

*Whether you're thinking of making a move, or are just curious about Real Estate trends in the area or neighbourhood, please feel free to contact me anytime...*

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*"The Elementary Choice"*

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Please recycle this Newsletter by passing it along to a friend, family member or neighbour!



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## Smoke Alarms

Most fatal fires occur at night. A smoke alarm might be the only thing to rouse your family in time to escape. An alarm is needed on every storey of your home as well as outside bedroom areas. Establish a regular monthly routine for testing smoke alarms. Remember, smoke alarms do wear out, plan to replace them after 10 years. ■

# Tis the Season

## Shovelling

Here are some simple tips, for smart (meaning injury free) snow shovelling. Establish good habits as you embark on another year of clearing snow from your walkway, patios, driveway, decks, sidewalk....

❖ If you have heart problems or high blood pressure, or if you're not accustomed to exercise, talk to your doctor first.

❖ Stretch for 5 minutes to warm up back, leg, shoulder and arm muscles before you start shovelling.

❖ A shovel with a curved handle will help keep your back straight. Plastic shovels are lighter than metal, easing lower-back strain.

❖ Push snow rather than lift it. If lifting is unavoidable, shovel small amounts, and bend your knees with legs apart, keeping your back straight and lift with your legs. Don't twist when tossing snow - turn your body with your feet.

❖ Be cautious in slippery, icy conditions - take precautions ensure adequate traction by spreading sand or cat litter.

❖ Drink lots of liquids to stay hydrated.

❖ Take frequent breaks; stop shovelling if you feel pain or fatigue.

❖ If you experience back pain, lie down or sit with a back support; apply a cold pack to the affected area for 10 minutes every hour or two. Repeat for a couple of days. For severe and/or persistent symptoms, consult a health professional.



De-icing

sidewalks & walkways.

Spreading salt over icy walks in winter may save your neck, but it's often lethal to grass, shrubs - even trees. Consider using sand or cat litter instead.



## Here's how to freshen Smelly Wellies

### When Wet

Right after wearing the boots, crumple up some newspaper and stuff it tightly into the foot of each wellie to absorb any moisture and odours. Wipe off mud and dirt from the boots' exterior with a damp paper towel or rag. Put them in a cool place to dry. If the interiors are soaked by water that has seeped in from the top, you may need to replace the paper once or twice as it absorbs the moisture (don't bother trying to blow-dry the lining; it'll take forever - and the smell will get worse).



Rain boots are great...they keep the wet out - but, they also keep the sweat in.

### Once Dry

The day after the newspaper has done its job, remove it, and generously sprinkle in some odour-absorbing baking soda or foot powder. With your hands (you'll want to wash them when you're done with this part!) work it into the lining of the boots.

Leave the baking soda in for several hours or overnight.

Take the wellies outside, turn them upside down, bang them together to shake out excess powder. It doesn't hurt to leave some powder behind - it'll just keep on working.

Make it easier next time...

Keep boots fresh between rainy days by slipping in soft cedar shoe inserts (they're basically cotton sachets filled with cedar chips) to absorb odour.

# G

## Grandparents

Just about the time a woman thinks her work is done, she becomes a grandmother.

Edward H. Dreschnack

Grandparents are there to help children get into mischief they haven't thought of yet.

Gene Perret

To a small child, the perfect granddad is unafraid of big dogs and fierce storms but absolutely terrified of the word 'boo'.

Robert Brutal

## Amaryllis

If you'd like to decorate your home this holiday season with a few of these stunning flowers it's time to get them potted!

These giants start to grow as soon as they're planted.

Good quality bulbs may produce as many as 6 blooms on a single stalk and can bloom for up to 6 weeks!

Choose a weighty pot about one size larger than the bulb - amaryllis bloom better when pot-bound but are top-heavy when in flower so be sure to choose a heavy pot.

It's easy, and the many Amaryllis kits now widely available make it even easier - the only item you'll need is a pot.

● Pre-soak the roots in lukewarm water (overnight).

● Plant in a sandy soil mix, leaving appx one-third of the bulb above soil level. Water to moisten soil.

● Place the pot in direct sunlight.

● Limit watering at this point to encourage blooms.

● Flowers will appear in 6 to 8 weeks.

● Water and fertilize on a regular basis once flowers bud.

Amaryllis bulbs come in large, miniature and double-blooming varieties, and in a wide range of colours including, white, pink, peach, red, and even red & white striped.



## Are you dreaming about a renovation for your Home?



If you're thinking about remodeling your home, your first task will be to create a realistic budget. But that involves some careful pre-planning.

Before you begin to budget, here are some suggestions from the pros.

**Imagine...**the new space and make sketches. It's easier to plan something you can see.

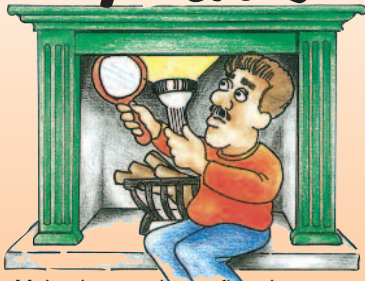
**Explore.** Talk to homeowners who have undertaken a similar renovation. Read books, magazines, check out websites, watch instructional videos. Make notes about what you like - list any questions you may have.

**Planning ahead.**

Is this renovation intended to add value to your home because you plan to sell it next year?...if so, you'll want to pay special attention to assessing the value of the house and the neighbourhood, as well as the 'value' of your intended reno.

Or, is this reno intended to add comfort or pleasure for your family?...or, accomodate a growing or shrinking household? If you plan to stay for at least 10 years, almost any renovation will be worth its cost.

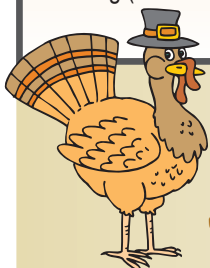
# HEARTH Hints



- Maintain a moderate fire - hot enough to prevent a cool flue liner and creosote buildup, but not hot enough to ignite creosote that may already have formed. To do this, burn only seasoned, dry hardwood.
- Avoid smoldering fires; confirm that the fire is out before going to bed or leaving your home. In the case of an air-tight wood burning stove; ensure the fire is banked, the flue adjusted and the door is closed tightly.
- Never burn trash or other highly flammable material that will produce a sudden, hot, burst of fire or could emit poisonous gases.
- Inspect your chimney monthly to check for creosote deposits or other problems. Have your chimney checked, and cleaned, every year, whether your house is old or new, an annual chimney inspection by a professional chimney sweep can ensure that both your chimney system and venting system are working properly and safely. Only employ professionals to inspect, clean and maintain your chimney.
- Check stovepipes and connections. Ensure screws are located at every joint and check for leaching (dark staining or white powder) at every joint.
- Inspect and maintain your chimney flashing (the seal between the chimney and the roof).

Here are some tips that will maximize the benefits of your fireplace or wood burning stove while helping to ensure safe operation.

- Avoid stovepipe accessories, such as heat reclaimers or extractors. They reduce pipe temperatures, adding to creosote build-up.
- Install a rain cap. A rain cap should be installed on top of all metal and masonry chimneys. If you have a spark screen around the chimney cap, check it regularly for blockage.
- Make children aware of the dangers of fire and fireplaces and woodstoves.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector to warn if harmful gases are entering your home because of a blocked or damaged chimney.
- Use a fireplace screen and/or glass door to prevent sparks from popping out and igniting carpeting, flooring or furniture. Special screens also prevent animals and children from going near wood stoves.
- Place a spark arrester at the top of the chimney - it prevents hot ashes from escaping the chimney, while animals, birds, debris and rainwater are kept out.
- Rather than using newspaper to get your fire started, kindling is the most efficient fire-starting material. Be aware that some magazines and newspapers give off toxic smoke when burned due to the types of ink used in the printing process. Newspapers also send burning ashes up your flue that can ignite a dirty chimney or land on your roof while still aglow.
- For more information about wood burning chimneys; contact your local fire department or a WETT certified professional. For gas appliances and chimneys, contact your qualified heating contractor.



## Turkey

- ✓ How much Turkey? For fresh or frozen whole turkey, allow .50 to .70 kg (1 to 1 1/2 pounds) per person.
- ✓ 2 Hours... is the limit to leave turkey (fresh or cooked) out of the fridge without risking salmonella poisoning.
- ✓ Turkey is a good source of protein and vitamins; niacin, B-6 and B-12. Per bit, turkey packs more tryptophan than any other protein. Tryptophan is a chemical that helps the body produce serotonin, the feel-good neurotransmitter.

## Backyard Birds



### Choosing Wild Bird Seed

Wild bird seed mixes contain a variety of seeds and grains, each having distinct nutritional features and attracting different species of birds.

**Striped Sunflower...**the most common bird seed available, it attracts a wide variety of large birds like cardinals and cedar waxwings.

**Black Oil Sunflower...**smaller seed than the striped, high in oil and protein, good for providing birds with energy in cold weather.

**Nyjer (Thistle) Seed...**a tiny very palatable seed with a high oil content, attracts finches and other small birds.

**Millet...**an excellent 'mixer' feed to stretch Nyjer seed and is usually a part of Distlefink and finch mixes too.

**Safflower...**used in mixes and has a rich oil content, and the rumour...*squirrels don't like it!*

**Cracked corn...**mixed with feed and provides carbohydrates and vitamin A.

**Milo...**provides bulk to mixes.

### Attracting birds to your Backyard

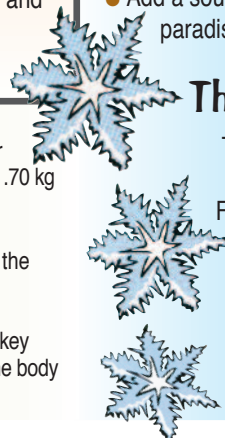
**Planting is the best way to ensure you meet the needs of the greatest diversity of birds throughout the seasons.**

- Choose an assortment of plants and mix taller and shorter trees, shrubs, native flowers and grasses for your yard.
- For over-wintering birds, and early returning migrants, choose some shrubs and trees that hold their seeds and berries well into winter and others that produce them early in spring.
- Diversify the height, leaf type (deciduous and evergreen), and food (fruit, berries and nuts) provided by the plants in your gardens.
- Avoid using pesticides.
- To attract seed-eaters like finches and sparrows, allow sunflowers, goldenrod, and other flowers to go to seed.
- Add a source of fresh water and you will have created a paradise for your feathered friends.

### The shortest day of the year

The day that has the shortest amount of daylight is the day of the winter solstice. For mid-northern latitudes, the sun in is the sky of only about 9 hours. Depending on the year, this date can vary, falling on either December 21st or 22nd.

**This year, the winter solstice falls on Sunday, December 21st.**



# Tis the Season



The season of runny noses and barking coughs presents quandaries for the well-mannered but ill person. Just because you're sick and felling sorry for yourself does not let you off the hook when considering how your actions affect others. Of course, the best thing to do when you are sick is to stay at home, well away from the rest of humanity. If this option is just not possible for you, here are a few suggestions:

### Let people know you are sick.

There's nothing worse than greeting someone with a warm double-cheeked kiss, only to be told moments later that she's got the worst cold she's had in years. If you've made social plans with friends and you feel sickly, but well enough to go out, give them a heads-up. Allow others the chance to avoid you if they choose, and be gracious if they decide their health is more important than this particular visit with you - this applies to your sick children as well.

### No hand shaking.

Germs travel more effectively by a handshake than a peck on the cheek. In business situations, own up to the cold and explain that you won't be shaking hands in order to avoid spreading the bug. Also, keep your hands off other people's stuff during cold and flu season. This is especially true of food and drink. Most experts agree that handwashing is the single most effective practice to prevent the spread of germs.

### Direct your sneezes.

Keep tissues handy and use them! Cotton hankies may look good but they are not as sanitary as using paper tissues that are thrown away. Whenever possible, direct a sneeze into your arm rather than into your hands. If you do catch a sneeze with your hands, immediately wash them, and be sure to wash your hands after blowing your nose.

### Fending off a Cold.

- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Eat a balanced diet of fresh fruit & veggies
- Stay well rested.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Discard tissues after each use.

# PLANNING

**Good Planning saves you time and effort. By planning your activities you'll be better equipped to...**

- ✓ solve problems quickly
- ✓ make decisions
- ✓ avoid frustration
- ✓ keep from getting bogged down in day-to-day tasks
- ✓ work on life goals and priorities
- ✓ manage stress more effectively

Effective tools for planning and scheduling include:

#### Calendars:

To capture the big picture use a yearly calendar to keep track of important dates, functions, commitments, holidays, special events etc.

#### Weekly Planning Lists:

Get a weekly overview of what you have to do by scheduling a week's worth of projects and activities.

#### Things To Do Lists:

Plan daily activities by listing everything you have to do, then prioritizing each task. Cross off items as you complete them and make a new list at the end of each day.

**Planning and scheduling helps you become more organized which makes it easier for you to achieve more each day...less stressfully!**

**Your Neighbourhood  
Real Estate  
Resource Center**



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