



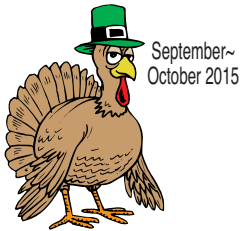
# Craig Watson

Sales Representative



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

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September~  
October 2015

*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*

## Thinking of RENOVATING?



Canadians love to renovate their homes! We spend 20+ billion dollars each year on projects ranging from; kitchen & bathroom updates, remodelling rooms, painting, flooring, to decking, driveways and landscaping. When it comes to renovating, there are 3 basic types... **Lifestyle, Maintenance, and Retrofit** projects.

### Lifestyle

These renovations are projects that enhance your home. Finishing the basement, installing a jacuzzi in the master bathroom, adding a solarium or pool are examples of renovations that enhance your home and lifestyle.

### Maintenance

These types of projects protect your investment in your home. They include everything from repaving the driveway to caulking windows to replacing a roof.

### Retrofit

Retrofit projects go beyond general maintenance and usually involve the building shell or mechanical systems. Examples include installing extra insulation, upgrading a heating system or replacing exterior siding.

*If you're contemplating a renovation project, only you know the reasons why - you should know your homes' financial potential, and limitations. As well, your home's general structural condition is an important factor to consider before undertaking any major renovation. Before embarking on the*

*very visible - and instantly rewarding - cosmetic projects, you should start with projects that protect the basic value of your home - for example, a spa-style ensuite bath is the type of renovation you'd take on after you know that the electrical, heating and ventilation systems in your home are sound.*

**Here are a few considerations to keep in mind as you 'visualize' a renovation project for your home.**

Look at your project from all sides... how will it affect your home?, your family?, your finances?, the resale value of your property? Consider your long term plans for the house and center your current project around your future plans. While some renos will likely result in a higher selling price for your home - to get value - you must have a realistic sense of what your specific project can do for your home's value. *Keep in mind that 'renovation' is not a synonym for investment.*

**What's the payback?...here are a few examples of renovation projects and their respective paybacks.**

When reviewing these numbers keep in mind that the renovation itself is but one factor in determining value -there are many other factors involved; overall condition of your home, comparative condition of other homes in your neighbourhood, quality of materials/workmanship as well as regional variations (ie: a home office

*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...*

**Craig Watson**  
Sales Representative

*"The Elementary Choice"*

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## *Need Advice?*

**Whether you're buying, or selling a home, refinancing, or embarking on a home renovation project - talk with a professional - one who can provide you with expert advice and explanation.**

*Article continues on page 2...*

# Thinking of RENOVATING?

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may be a valuable addition to a home if you live in a metropolitan area like Toronto or Vancouver - but in a small rural community in Alberta its value would be much less.

**What's the payback?...here are a few examples**

Renovation Project	Estimated Payback
Interior Painting.....	60 to 70%
Exterior Painting.....	60 to 65%
Upgraded Heating System.....	30 to 40%
Kitchen.....	65 to 70%
Main Bathroom.....	60 to 65%
Deck.....	50%

**A Final Word...**A note of caution - when it comes to some renovations - like swimming pools, hot tubs, tennis courts - these rarely offer much payback and can actually detract from the value of a home. Also, renos which render one part of a house totally different than another (this also pertains to 'exterior versus interior') can reduce your home's value.



## Helping KIDS Cope

Children are creatures of habit, which can make the upheaval of a remodeling especially trying. As much as possible include your children in the process...

- ▶ Make a calendar showing the start and completion dates for the project. Show them drawings, pictures, paint chips, fabric, tile and flooring samples. Young children may enjoy marking off the days or recording such landmarks as the arrival of cabinets or the installation of tile.
- ▶ Make children very aware that until the job is completed, the work site is a dangerous area and out of bounds

unless they are directly supervised. Warn them against handling materials, tools or electrical equipment.

- ▶ If you elect to eat out, have several 'children's choice' nights so the kids can take turns deciding where the family will have dinner. Or, if you've decided to rely on the microwave or BBQ, allow them to choose a favourite dish or two.

## Smiles and Chuckles



"And this is the anti-gravitational room."

# Xeriscaping

The word *Xeriscape* (pronounced 'zeriscape') is a combination of two words, 'xeros' derived from the Greek word, which mean dry, and 'landscape'. Xeriscape means to landscape in a way that doesn't require extra irrigation.

The principle behind xeriscaping is using plants that don't need a lot of watering. How do you like the sound of watering as little as once a month? All you have to do is plant native and drought-resistant plants then apply a layer of mulch. Imagine sitting back, enjoying the beauty of a low maintenance, hassle free, and drought tolerant, garden and landscape!...it's easier than you think.

## Plants

In general, drought-resistant plants will have broad roots and small, thick leaves, often with a waxy, glossy or fuzzy coating on the leaves. Here are a few examples;

- ▶ Waxy leaf coverings like **Sedum**
- ▶ Deep tap roots like **Daylilies** and **Peonies**
- ▶ Silvery, finely-divided, foliage like **Herbs**
- ▶ Compound leaves like **Locust** trees



Check in your area for municipal water-saving initiatives that may include information on xeriscaping. For a list of drought-resistant plants suitable for your area check out [www.eartheasy.com](http://www.eartheasy.com).

Planting native plants, those indigenous to your local soil and climate, will also attract more butterflies, birds and native insects to your natural oasis. Ask at your local garden centre about plants, trees and shrubs native to your area.



## Here are a few practical tips to get you started with xeriscaping your backyard and property...

- ▶ Size your lawn to fit the spread of your sprinkler system - or sprinkler - that way you won't be wasting water watering the patio, walkway or driveway.
- ▶ Extend downspouts to direct water onto the lawn and into garden, shrub and perennial beds.
- ▶ Garden, shrub and perennial beds surrounding the lawn will maximize run-off.
- ▶ Grouping plants by their moisture needs will not only cut back on water useage, it will ensure that you won't be over-watering drought-tolerant perennials (like *Rubeckia*), and shrubs (like *Junipers*). Over-watering these plants causes them to flop over.
- ▶ Mulching perennial and shrub beds means less moisture lost to evaporation - and fewer weeds.
- ▶ Planting shrubs, trees, and perennials in the fall (rather than in the spring or summer) will allow new roots to establish themselves by taking advantage of fall rains - and the spring melt. Fall planting also allows you to take advantage of end-of-the-season sales!



## In the Garden Leaves

While small amounts of autumn leaves are great for mixing into your compost bin, larger quantities are better kept separate and rotted down into leafmould. This can be used throughout your property; worked into the soil in the garden, spread on the lawn and around trees and shrubs. Leaves contain traces of substances beneficial to other plants. When added to the soil, their fine, crumbly texture is perfect for encouraging good root development. Some of the best leafmould comes from rotted beech and oak leaves. Deciduous shrubs such as dogwoods and forsythias are also good sources of material. Obviously evergreen needles should be avoided. If you don't have the space for a separate leaf container, gather up your autumn leaves and store them in large black plastic bags. Pack leaves in really tightly, and if they're dry, add a little water as you build up the heap. Tie the bags firmly at the top and then spear the sides several times with the tines of a garden fork (air speeds the rotting process). Store the bags in your garden shed, or under a tarp beside your composter, for at least a year. You'll know the leafmould is ready for use when it crumbles into small, flaky particles.



**Tip** Chop up leaves lying on the lawn with your lawnmower. Their tiny pieces can then be easily absorbed by the grass without you having to gather, bag, and store them.



## How to Store Tender Flowering Bulbs

- Dig up the flower bulbs. Do this after the first frost, or when the foliage has withered and yellowed. Using a garden fork, dig under the flower bulb and gently pry upwards. Remember to keep the dug up bulbs labelled or in groups for easy planting in the spring.

- **Prepare the bulbs for storage.** Discard all damaged or diseased/soft bulbs. Cut off all remaining foliage with a sharp knife. Lay out the bulbs on a flat surface, in a well-ventilated area. Do not allow the bulbs to touch. Allow them to dry for 1 week.

- **Prepare storage containers** for each type of bulb. This can be anything that is not air tight such as a paper bag, open crate, or pantyhose. Half fill the container with peat moss, vermiculite, sand, or any combination of these 3 materials.

- After a week of drying, the bulbs can be stored. Gently remove all remaining soil from the bulbs. Place bulbs into the containers and cover them with the mixture. Overwinter the containers in a cool, but not freezing, dry spot - the basement will usually do.

Begonia, Canna, Crocosmia, Dahlia, Freesia, Galtonia, Gladiolas and Ranunculus are examples of bulbs best lifted and stored for the winter.

# 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



## Migration

During the coming weeks, many species of birds and butterflies will begin their annual migrations back to more southernly regions. Your garden can help them during their journey - and on the return trip come spring!

- Migrating birds and butterflies need food when preparing for fall journeys and when they arrive in the spring. To help them out, populate your garden with regionally native plants that flower or bear fruit in different seasons. Fall blooming plants include asters, goldenrods and perennial sunflowers. Berry-producing shrubs include dogwoods and viburnums. Plants that flower early in spring; cherries, hawthorns and willows provide nectar and pollen when migrating species arrive.
- Leaving perennial seed heads on plants like purple coneflowers and black-eyed Susans will provide food for overwintering finches, juncos and other species. Seed heads can also feed returning birds in the spring. Shrubs such as winterberry holly, sumac and highbush cranberry produce berries that can linger into late winter, providing food for those early arriving species that might face one last cold snap.
- Make mud puddles! To encourage butterflies to dally in your garden while on their journey, create a damp area with mud, sand or manure. Butterflies drink in minerals from these areas in a process known as 'mudpuddling'.



## Here's how to freshen Smelly Wellies

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

### 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).



### 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.

# Painting

## How to pick a paint shade

Gazing at a sea of paint chips and wondering how do you begin wading through the choices? Unless you're renovating your room from scratch, your best bet is to take a look at the items in the room that will not be painted or changed - things like curtains, floors, rugs or the fabric of sofas and chairs. These will guide you to suitable colours for your walls.

**The #1 mistake to avoid** - don't pick a colour in the store! First, take home the paint chips and see how the colour looks under various lighting conditions in the room where it will be used. Then, once you've narrowed down your choices, you may want to buy a small test-pot of the colour and paint a piece of foam board or section of wood...put it next to flooring, drapery, upholstered furniture.

Now that you've decided on a colour, don't panic with the first roll of paint! In isolation, a colour can look too strong - you can only judge it accurately after two coats have been applied over the entire area. Also keep in mind that once everything, furniture, area rugs, throws and cushions, wall art etc. goes back into the room, the wall colour will be neutralized and you'll get a truer sense of it.

*There aren't any strict rules about colour, colour is a personal thing. Do choose a colour that you like, and, do consider the purpose of a room and the mood you're trying to create.*



## Rules for dealing with Pro Painters

In theory, painting seems like a simple project. But, there is often more to it. Professional painters have the know-how and the right equipment (scaffolds, sprayers, sanders etc.) to get the job done right - and quickly. Hiring a pro?...here are a few things to keep in mind.

Use the same guidelines you have for hiring other renovation professionals. Get references and call them; find out how long the painter has been in business; verify that the business has liability insurance; and ask for detailed written quotes that include start and finish dates and a price guarantee.

The price should include prepping, priming, painting, chaulking trim, repairing imperfections; flaws and holes in walls and ceilings, as well as cleanup and touchups.

You choose the colours - have your painter purchase the paint. Your contractor will ensure that the right paint type - and paint finish - is used for the project.

# 'Tis the Season

*To start thinking about turning on the furnace.  
To ensure your heating system runs efficiently and lasts longer...*



**Get an Annual Tune-up.** A heating system needs annual maintenance to keep it running efficiently, and to repair minor problems before they become major ones (read expensive). Best time to book a service appointment; now - before you turn on your furnace for the season.

**Filters.** You've heard it before, but it's worth repeating. A dirty filter slows down air flow and wastes energy by making your system work harder. Change your furnace filter once a month during winter months, and at least once every 3rd month during the balance of the year.

**Programmable Thermostat.** If you haven't already, considering installing one this fall. Regulating and controlling the temperature in your home can save you up to 12% on your energy bill.

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