



Erskine Real Estate Review

508-752-0466

"Information You Can Use"

Spring 2008

Some Green House Tips *Not the glass kind*

Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact florescent bulbs. On average they use 75% less energy and can last up to 10 times longer.

Reduce drafts buy caulking and adding weather stripping to windows and doors. The hardware store has insulation that goes under your outlet covers that can help too.

Reduce usage of electricity buy unplugging chargers, adapters, and appliances when not in use. An easy way to do this is to have a surge protected power strip that you can just click off. The TV and other appliances draw power even when not on. According to the Department of Energy about 75% of the power used to run TVs, VCRs, Computers, and stereos are consumed while the units are turned off.

Check the water heater for temperature. The department of Energy says that for every 10 degrees of temperature you turn down on your tank, it will save you 5% on your water heating bill. Lower temperatures also slow the build up of mineral deposits and corrosion over time according to their studies- so you may also get more life out of your water heater.

BARBEQUED KIELBASA

- 1c. grape jelly
- 1c. ketchup
- 3 lbs. kielbasa

Cut up kielbasa and put in a crockpot. Add grape jelly and ketchup. Mix together and cook on low for 4 hours.



Here are some wonderful listings from Erskine Real Estate.



Leicester \$415,000

This is a custom built contemporary with a wall of glass providing water views, dock and access to Styles Res. Designed for entertaining and family living, with sliders to deck and hot tub, this home has an open floor plan, cathedral ceilings, two full kitchens, 2 full baths,

heated two car garage with storage on a dead end street. This home is light, bright and sunny, with easy care vinyl siding, Title 5 in hand, central air, central vac. & sunroom off master.

Plymouth

\$499,900

Come experience the crashing white caps of private Priscilla Beach. This charming ranch style home offers spectacular ocean views from the formal dining room, living room and deck. Beautiful hardwood floors, 1st floor laundry, master bath, knotty pine interior and an elegant fireplace add to the appeal. The fully finished basement offers endless possibilities. Solid summer rental history at \$1550 a week. All of this and the entrance to the white beach sand is right across the street.

North Brookfield - Land

This is a lovely 4.616 acre lot conveniently located a few minutes out of North Brookfield center on route 67. The lot is rectangular in shape and is primarily level and wooded. Neighboring lot is also available. \$95,000 each.

This rolling knoll of beautiful land boasts privacy and scenic views. These spacious 6.493 acres offer many possibilities to any prospective homeowner. Conveniently located on Route 67 only minutes to the quaint center of North Brookfield. Come build your dream. \$118,000.

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How to add value to your home without going broke.

The National Association of Realtors recently listed some great ways to improve the appearance of your home without spending a lot of cash:

- *Add a chair rail or decorative molding.* There are lots of choices at your local home centers that add a luxurious touch to any room.

- *Paint.* It can be one wall or the whole room. Now paint centers can match almost any color. Remember that you should spend 2-3 times as much time preparing as you do painting. Having a fresh clean surface makes all the difference in the finished room. (Louise's tip- Make sure you have good lighting and drop cloths for both the clean up and painting. A bright movable spot light can be a great investment.)

- *Wash the windows-* or have them done. It is amazing the difference that a sparkling view of the outside can make. Also check and see if outside shrubbery is encroaching on your windows. Remember most home inspectors would like at least a 6 inch air space between the house and the shrubs. This is also a great time to look for leaks, peeling paint and other damage to areas of your home you might not often look at closely.

- *Change the window treatments-* get a slip cover or throw some pillows on the sofa. Pick a budget and then go to your favorite store and look for color or texture themes to revitalize the room. It is amazing how much can be changed with a few accents of color. If you have invested in expensive window treatments – don't throw them out. Changing the drapes with the seasons can give a room a whole new feel year after year.

- *Check the lighting.* As we get older our need for good light increases by more than 30% according to the National Science Foundation. When is the last time you really examined where the lighting is in a room – and if it is effective for your needs? You may not need to buy anything new, just move things around or change a few bulbs or shades. (Louise's tip- brightness and cleanliness are two of the top selling features of any home. It also can help your mood. Don't wait to brighten it up until you sell - get the benefits of a light and bright home for yourself.)

- *Storage is the new 'must have'.* According to researchers we have 50% more *stuff* than people did in 1900. From computers to clothes there is more of everything in today's home. With all this clutter has come the need to organize. Take a look at unused areas like your garage, basement or attic and see if some inexpensive storage shelves would help. (Louise's tip: If at all possible use solid colored bins or shelving that can shut the clutter away. So when closed up they present a pleasing neutral line of color and don't overwhelm the room visually. I make each shelf or box with a removable label with what is inside). As you are organizing these storage areas take the opportunity to consider donating things you no longer use. Someone who has been left homeless in a fire would love those pots and pans or mismatched glasses that you have not touched since the 1970's and you can get a tax donation too! Call the Donations Clearinghouse at 508 752- 9278. They will take most household goods except clothing.

- *Start a window garden* or get a live plant. Start some seeds for the garden or herbs to snip for the kitchen. Kids will love this project and seeds and potting soil are not a big investment. (Louise's tip: Buyer's love plants because they show that the home is livable, but retire the plant with 3 feet of stem and 2 leaves or the philodendron that circles the kitchen 3 times. Too much greenery can be distracting).

- *Change the towels in the bath,* and the shower curtain too. It will give you a nice lift and can really spruce up the bath.

