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Getting Ready to Sell Your Home

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Special to the Palisadian-Post

In today's market with 103 single-family homes actively listed in the Palisades, and in a time where buyers first see their potential new home online, it is more important than ever to make sure your house gives the best first impression possible, both virtually and in reality. Here are a few ways to prep your home and help it sell for the highest price in the shortest amount of time.

Painting walls a neutral color does wonders for opening up a home, making it light and bright, and creating a blank palette that will appeal to the most amount of buyers.

Making minor repairs such as replacing burnt out light bulbs, repairing broken handles, sticky windows and tricky doors helps to reassure buyers that they are in a well taken care of home.

Doing pre-inspections not only helps give you a guideline when making minor repairs, but also gives future buyers a heads-up to any potential issues with the home. Doing this means you can tell them before opening escrow "Hey, we know there are \$5,000 worth of dry rot repairs, so don't come

back to us and ask for a credit for that in the middle of escrow." We always recommend doing a termite inspection, general home inspection and a retrofit inspection when the home is first listed on the market.

Staging your home can make a huge impact on the first impression it gives buyers. Furnishing a home to sell can be very different than furnishing a home to live in. Buyers should be able to envision their own style and taste in their future home, and stagers create a neutral environment where they can do just that. They also carefully place furniture in ways that make rooms look large and spacious, even if not as functional for everyday life. Staging also contributes to excellent photography.

De-clutter before photos are taken, and do your best to keep your home that way for all private showings and open houses. It is always best to leave counters free of mail and personal items. Before open houses, always remember to lock up valuables, electronics and prescription medications.

Pricing your home at or just under market value can help encourage more action. In an ideal world, you want to get lots of activity in the first two weeks

that lead to multiple offers so you have the upper hand when negotiating the terms of your deal.

List your home with a top local agent. Local agents know the area and comparable properties well, so they can better educate you on the market and help you choose a strategic list price. You will also want to make sure the agent you chose provides both extensive online and print marketing for your property. Make sure he or she will have professional photography and video taken of your home as today's buyers first see every new listing online.

The homes that sell quickly and for the highest price consistently have these attributes in common: the sellers and their agents together have taken the time and effort to stage the home, market it well and prepare for a smooth and successful close of escrow.

Sarah Knauer is a sales partner with the Marguleas Team, which has sold close to \$1 billion in properties and was selected by Wall Street Journal as one of the top 60 teams in the country out of 1 million agents. Sarah can be reached on her cell at 310-663-4606 or amalfiestates.com.