



# On the House

www.RealEstateInDurham.com



October 2009

## This Month's Featured Listings

### One of a Kind Century home



Full of charm and character thru-out  
Located on 1 Acre of mature land  
4 spacious bedrooms  
Separate nanny apartment  
Separate self contained office ideal for home business

**\$550,000**

### Luxury Executive Home



- Great room with soaring cathedral ceiling & windows with fireplace
- Family size eat in kitchen
- Formal living and dining room
- 4 large bedrooms
- Master bedroom has separate living room

**\$379,000**

## Fabulous Fall!

Welcome to our October issue of 'On The House'

September was the fourth consecutive month that both the number of homes sold and the average price of homes were higher than last year. This is a trend that is happening across the country.

Politicians and economists are having a tough time deciding if the recession is over or not but it seems that the home buyers have already made up their mind.

One of the reasons for the sudden market shift happened during the first week of June when the banks raised their mortgage rates twice in one week. This started a panic amongst the first time buyers who were pre-approved and locked in at the lower rate for a period of time. They wanted to buy before the higher rates effect them and lock in at the pre-June rate for the next five years. This flurry of activity created a shortage of homes in the market which drove the prices up. Other buyers that were sitting on the fence waiting for the prices to drop even further finally jumped off the fence in a panic and wanted to buy which drove the prices even higher.

A couple of lessons to be learned here:

1. You cannot time the market.
2. Always get pre-approved for a mortgage and lock in your rate before starting to look for a home.

To keep up to date with the market conditions you can register to get our monthly "Market Watch" newsletter. To get this short and to the point newsletter register at:  
[www.realestateindurham.com/eNewsletter](http://www.realestateindurham.com/eNewsletter)

### Home & Business



- Owner relocating
- Only pet food store in town
- High traffic road in rapidly growing community
- House has been totally renovated and modernized
- 2-car insulated and heated garage

**\$375,000**

### Family Friendly Neighbourhood



- Open concept living & dining room with walkout
- Main floor hardwood & ceramics
- Bright and airy eat-in kitchen
- Deck overlooks mature fully fenced yard
- Walk to pool, church, park and arena

**\$275,900**

### Modern Bungalow



- Bright and spacious home
- Huge Eat-in kitchen with walk-out to deck
- Master bedroom with full ensuite and walk-in closet
- Close to Shops, Churches and public transit

**\$250,000**

### Two Family Home



- 3+1 bdrm, 2-storey home in Orono
- Open-concept main floor
- 2nd floor self-contained apartment with sunroom
- Finished basement with den and rec room
- On large treed lot with Pool

**\$275,000**



Masood



## Five Tips to Improving Your Home's Value

Are you one of many Canadians who are thinking about improving your current home? Before you take the leap, here are five things you should know before you start spending your money.

### 1. Lifestyle Home Improvements

Lifestyle home improvements such as kitchens and bathrooms, master bedroom suites, media rooms and "outdoor rooms" consistently improve a home's value. As a result, these are always your best investment. Fans of TV home improvement shows have been trained to expect the best; so not only are lifestyle improvements a good investment, but they will help your home's value increase.

### 2. Maintenance Improvements

Maintenance improvements are necessary, but don't expect the value of your home to go up as a result. Buyers expect systems and maintenance to be adequate and up to date. Exterior paint jobs may help increase the "curb appeal" of your house, but don't expect a \$5000 paint job to translate into \$5000 more in home value. But do note failure to maintain your property will make the value go down by the cost it will take to repair the damage or implement necessary maintenance. Think of maintenance improvements as a way to protect your home's value from going down.

### 3. Cosmetic Improvements

Cosmetic improvements have a neutral effect on a home's value. Jobs like wall papering or painting are improvements most homeowners can do themselves, so the perception of their value is less. Jobs such as repainting on the interior will have less impact on the value of your home. If you can, try to do most cosmetics yourself instead of paying someone else to do the work.

### 4. Beware over improving

Beware over improving, especially if you plan to sell within 2-5 years, you may want to approach all improvements cautiously. Before you commit to any big projects, understand whether a three car garage or a pool is out of character for your neighbourhood. If your house is improved beyond the neighbourhood that surrounds it, it's likely that the value of your home won't be realized when it comes time to sell.

### 5. Stay informed.

Keep up with home values. Realtors use home sales information on comparable sales to put a value on a home. The best way to assess value is to look at home sales of properties that are similar to yours.



# Win \$25,000!



**Visit [RealEstateInDurham.com](http://RealEstateInDurham.com) for a chance to win \$25,000!  
Send in your videos, photos or stories on why you love where  
you live and you could win.**

**Full details at our website  
[www.RealEstateInDurham.com](http://www.RealEstateInDurham.com)**

## 10-minute simple home maintenance tasks

Home maintenance is something we often neglect. Between our daily and weekly responsibilities of cooking, cleaning, laundry, etc., maintenance is something that often falls by the wayside. But it's essential and your home and property benefit from regular tune-ups.

Tackling home maintenance in 10-minute bursts is the smart way to get things done.

Here's our checklist of 15 things you can keep on top of, each in 10 minutes or fewer.

1. Vacuum the condenser coils at the back of your fridge annually.
2. Replace your furnace filters seasonally.
3. Polish your natural wood front door. If painted, surface wash it.
4. Clean the air conditioner grill and register.
5. Dust and test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors twice a year.
6. Replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors annually.
7. Self-clean the oven (Okay, technically this takes hours, but it only takes a few minutes to set it up).
8. Clean your kitchen exhaust hood. Clean or replace the filter.
10. Check your water heater for signs of leakage or rust.
11. Look for worn extension cords. Replace them.
12. Inspect your furnace. Any signs of rust or scale? Any weird noises? If so, book a professional inspection.
13. Check your emergency flashlight. Do the batteries work? If not, replace them, or consider upgrading to a non-battery powered, manual wind-up model.



**If you are interested  
in any of our featured  
homes, please call  
Masood today!**



## Sales & Prices

### Buyer's Market No More!

The Durham Region Association of REALTORS® (DRAR) reported 825 sales in September 2009, down 0.5% from August '09, but up 9% from the 752 recorded in September '08. "Durham's fall market is starting stronger than ever," said Debbie Dawson, 2009 DRAR President. "With the reported 825 sales this September, it is the best selling September on record!"

## Testimonials

**"Very friendly, fast, efficient staff."**

Josee

**"We have used Masood before and always recommend you and your team."**

Tom and Virginia

**"Prompt responses; high level of communication."**

David

**"Your company outperformed any Real Estate company we have used in the past."**

Blaine and Ev

## Save at Newcastle Home Decor!

**\$5.00 OFF Benjamin Moore's Collection or MooreStyle Paint**

Simply send an email to newsletter@RealEstateInDurham.com with "coupon" in the subject line, and you'll receive a link to your discount coupon



Newcastle Home Decor

## September 2009 Market Activity

	No. of Homes For Sale	New Listings This Month	No. of Homes Sold	Median Price	Average Days on Market
WHITBY	243	206	169	\$280,000	27
OSHAWA	531	361	203	\$220,000	34
COURTICE/BOWMANVILLE	250	166	113	\$237,000	34
NEWCASTLE & AREA	142	59	27	\$294,500	49
SCUGOG	168	75	40	\$285,000	57

## Mortgage Rates

as of Oct 16th, 2009

1 year:	2.75%
2 year:	3.20%
3 year:	3.59%
5 year:	4.34%

*If your mortgage is coming up for renewal or you need a new mortgage call Masood @905.448.2921 for the lowest mortgage rates.*

# You Asked...

## "How long do I have to complete my renovations in order to claim the Home Renovation Tax Credit (HRTC)?"

The HRTC is a temporary initiative. Eligible home renovation expenditures are limited to work performed or goods acquired after January 27, 2009 and before February 1, 2010, pursuant to agreements entered into after January 27, 2009. Expenses entered into beyond February 1, 2010 do not qualify for the HRTC.

## "My planned renovations include measures to improve the energy efficiency of my home. Does this mean I miss out on tax savings?"

The HRTC complements support provided by the Government for Canadians to undertake energy-saving improvements to their homes. Federal grants paid through the ecoENERGY Retrofit program will not reduce the value of claims made for these expenditures under the HRTC.

## "What's a safe colour to paint my living/dining rooms, that will be on trend for the next five to seven years?"

Grey, grey, grey! A current trend in paint predicted to be the trend that will see you through the next five years. It's sophisticated, can be in either warm or cool tones, and coordinates perfectly with such upholstery favourites as taupe, wheat and chocolate.

Sudoku

2				
	4	8	2	7
9			7	8
9		1		6 3
2	9		5	1
7	1		2	5
5	8			6
	6	1	7	3
				4

Answers: [www.RealEstateInDurham.com](http://www.RealEstateInDurham.com)

## Fight back winter's cold

So you're finally going to bring your house in from the cold? You're not alone, and there's help available from many places to narrow the number of winterization choices to the most effective, and steer clear of the costly.

There are multiple ways homeowners can cut heating costs but be cautious about spending large sums on big-ticket projects that may do little to lower your bills. Home winterization falls into four primary elements: insulation, air sealing, ductwork, and heating equipment.

Filling walls with cellulose, foam, or fiberglass insulation can boost the house's R-value (the measure of its thermal resistance) from an insulation-free 3, to a whopping 12. But air leaks - gaps, slits, and other hidden openings - throughout a house can defeat that improvement.

If your furnace or boiler is more than twenty years old, chances are it's reaching the end of its service life.

Homeowners can realize enormous savings by replacing old systems with modern, certified high-efficiency boilers and furnaces. Though they run into the thousands of dollars,

new heating systems will yield immediate savings in fuel consumption, savings that can pay for the upgrade within ten years.

But homeowners should think twice about some big ticket items - among them are new replacement windows. Often the costs of the new windows far outweigh the savings they deliver. When you look at the amount of space windows take up compared to the over insulated portion of wall space, it is most likely cheaper and more cost effective to add additional insulation to a wall.



For far less money - as much as half the price - new exterior storm windows can be a smart investment in increasing the efficiency of aging windows, because they slow the loss of heat from inside and reduce air leakage. Other energy efficiency measures that don't pay off include duct cleaning (as opposed to sealing), fan-fold insulation board used in typical re-siding projects, and anything marketed as "reflectivity" or "radiant barrier". These include thin insulation with foil layers and, believe it or not, paint. They often have hugely inflated claims for R-value, which are simply not justified by physical reality.

### Investment Opportunity



- Fully leased commercial building
- Rapidly growing area
- Main St. Location
- Great return on investment
- Possibility of owner occupation

**\$245,000**

### Charming Family Home



- 3 bedroom detached in sought after neighbourhood
- Large eat-in "Greenhouse" kitchen with walk-out to yard
- Family room with laminate floor
- Finished basement with rec room

**\$234,500**

### Cottage without the Hassle Buy or Rent



- Lakefront lifestyle community
- Upgraded hardwood floors
- 2 parking spaces - 1 underground
- Gorgeous lake views
- Walk to marina, tennis courts, restaurant, clubhouse and more

**\$225,000**  
**\$2500/m**

### Condo by the Lake



- Open concept living room/dining room
- Walk-out to balcony
- Kitchen with breakfast bar
- 2-Bedrooms • Membership to Club

**\$160,000**

### Ground floor condominium



- 2-bdrm corner unit on ground floor
- Large bright kitchen and dining area
- Walk out to patio and garden
- Access fitness facility and recreation centre
- Close to public transit and Go

**\$179,000**

### Bungalow in the Heart of Bowmanville



- Well cared for home
- 2+2 bedrooms
- Private, mature garden
- Close to hospital, shops, 401 and school

**\$225,000**



Masood Vatandoust  
Broker - Team Leader



Helen Vatandoust  
Sales Representative



Andrea Wheeland  
Sales Representative



Tara Savelle  
Staging Specialist



Linda Baker  
Client Care Manager



Chris Sissons  
Technical Support & Web Advisor

If you would like your own copy of  
On The House, please contact our office. 905.448.2921



copyright ©2009 On The House

Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract with a brokerage