



## Securing the First Impression

WHILE SELLING YOUR PROPERTY, be prepared for it to be looked at critically, and take every opportunity to present it in the best possible way. First impressions matter, and whether it's a first-time home buyer or seasoned high-end investor, both will scrutinize your property first on the outside, and then on the inside.

### EVERY DETAIL MATTERS

Notwithstanding the punch list of work to be done—making necessary repairs, un-cluttering, cleaning, painting, and yard work—the project of detailing your home's exterior features should not escape your attention. Exterior cleaning will have the same impact as detailing a vehicle you want to sell. Regardless of its age or price, make certain you show your home in pristine condition.

### YOUR HOME EXTERIOR "RED FLAGS"

Black roof streaks are a warning sign. Not only do they diminish the beauty of your roof, but they are a living colony of algae, lichens, or moss that is harming the shingles and causing permanent damage that could result in up to 50 percent loss in the roof product's service life. Your buyer sees a roof that seems to indicate it has been neglected or it needs to be replaced. That wouldn't be just an inconvenience, but an expensive addition to budget for. It could even become a bartering tool in the negotiation of the final price. In addition, insurance companies have begun writing policy exclusions for this condition, a real problem that can blow the deal.

Finding green and black algae on the surfaces of siding, patios, walkways, and concrete and stone features diminish their appearance and translate to an attitude of not caring. For siding and soft surfaces, it damages the finishes. For brick paver patios, retaining walls, and limestone features, the algae appearance looks old, damp, and worn. Leaving these conditions untreated may indicate you opted-out on making necessary investments of time and resources to properly maintain your property.

Real estate brokers are trusted, highly-trained pros for many reasons. They know what it takes to move a property and they advise their sellers accordingly. There is no substitute for the "fresh eyes" they bring to the marketing and sale of your home, and exterior maintenance ranks at the top of the list when it comes to curb appeal. The listing photos are a powerful tool and do not lie. They tell the story of your property. If there were a more telling way to market the truth about your property, your broker would use it. With photo evidence, the good and bad will speak for itself.



### EXPERTS IN EXTERIOR CLEANING

Safe, low-pressure solution-based cleaning applications that are customized for your specific project produce the most gentle and thorough results in the market today. Regardless of the size or scope of your project, whether you are buying or selling a home, doing spring cleaning, throwing a party, or just ready to restore your aging property, hire an expert whose primary practice is the cleaning and restoration of your home's exterior and hard landscape materials—and chose one who guarantees the work.

The result will be a stunning first impression that makes your investment both smart and strategic and appealing to a home buyer. U

.....  
*Monica Zylinski and Gary Rogers own and operate House Shampoo, an expert exterior cleaning solutions business that serves greater Chicago, Illinois, and Southeastern Wisconsin. To learn more, call 815-585-4745, or email Gary Rogers at: gary@houseshampoo.com. Visit House Shampoo online at www.houseshampoo.com or www.facebook.com/houseshampoo.*

