

Improving the Value of Your Home

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Don't allow these economically dangerous times to depress you into immobilisation, create the start of your wealth with wise investments today.

Now is not a good time to sell your house, in this economic downturn rather invest spare cash in boosting the value of your home.

According to Men's Health Living the fourth most important thing to up the value of your house is to install an underfloor heating system, they say the ratio on investment was a 51 % return after installing a proper underfloor heating system that is efficient and environmentally friendly.

A beautiful fireplace is 8th on the list but with global warming creating excruciatingly hot summers and bitterly cold winters, anything that releases carbon emissions is not fashionable or desirable.

"Underfloor heating is cost effective – it will pay for itself in the first year with the savings on heating bills, it will cut up to 40% off your winter heating bill," Claus Jakobsen marketing manager of Danfoss, the world's top underfloor heating company. The Danish group has been active in South Africa for 15 years and it's 10 year guarantee and carefully approved contractors that receive regular skills-upgrading in the world's top technologies has seen it dominate the local market too with contractor installed and DIY products.

A decline in the building industry is seeing great deals on home fittings, building supplies and contractor fees. Now is the time to use your spare cash to improve how you live (now is the worst time to allow debt, don't buy on credit, only use available cash). Never get less than three quotes and ask neighbours and friends who have done renovations you admire for their recommendations and then still shop around.

Bargain with suppliers and contractors to get the best deal.

Don't pay big deposits upfront unless it is an absolutely reliable big company that has been in business a very long time.

Other key items estate agents say house buyers look for are:

A beautiful, expansive kitchen fitted with a great gas stove, dishwasher and concealed fridge, effective shopping can see a large kitchen fitted with new items for around R15 000.

Upgrade your bathroom with a pulse shower, underfloor heating, mirror demister and heated towel rails (the three items are all available from Danfoss at surprisingly low prices and very low electricity consumption – the towel rail uses the same amount of electricity as a 40W light bulb.) This can be done for around R4 000 or less.

Home automation improves security, adds to ease and efficiency around a home and quality of life. Good home automation systems operate security controls (alarms), access points (gates and doors), underfloor heating wireless thermostats, music systems, garden irrigation and swimming pool pumps. Prices vary according to the size of your home, shop around for the best deal and get initial quotes from your security company.

A fresh coat of paint is the fastest, cheapest way to impress buyers. Too many colours in a home usually make a house look smaller, choose a colour theme, ideally in neutral or soft colours and use it throughout the house. Use cushions, curtains and bedding to provide colour splashes.

Get damp or weather-proofing done, quotes vary dramatically in this industry, so shop around. Never use sidewalk contractors for these specialist services.

A beautiful, neat garden gives a good first impression to potential buyers and adds immeasurably to your enjoyment of your home. This is something you can do on your own with the help of books and television shows. Make your own compost from kitchen peelings and waste paper. Install home irrigation, it is easy and cost effective and will ensure your garden will flourish, while water costs drop.

There have never been more imaginative and easy-to-clean types of flooring than now, underfloor heating can even be placed under wooden floors, so don't be limited by the type of finish you want. Have something beautiful and with underfloor heating below it, comfort has no boundaries.

Install roof insulation to ensure your home is cool in summer and warm in winter.

Danfoss gives a 10 year guarantee on its product when installed correctly. It cuts 25% off heating bills and if linked to

solar energy with water based underfloor heating the cost drops to almost zero. Underfloor heating makes use of water at with temperature ranges of 45 deg C which is considerably lower than the 80 deg C used in water or oil based radiators.

As heat is radiated, less air movement means no cold draughts and with less dust being circulated and warm floor temperatures bacteria and dust mites are reduced by up to 80% which lowers the risk of allergies and respiratory problems including asthma. A constant climate aids healing and Danfoss underfloor heating is used in burn units in Europe because of this.

Room temperatures using underfloor heating can be reduced by up to 2 deg C yet still provide "comfort" each 1 deg C reduction in temperature reduces fuel consumption by six percent. Reduced energy places less pressure on national electricity grids and the amount of carbon emissions generated. Underfloor heating can also be linked to solar technologies.

Danfoss ensures that no electro-magnetic fields are issued from its products which lower the risk of carcinogens (cancer producing agents) in the environment, which is particularly important for reducing cancer risks in children. Danfoss has been producing energy-friendly products since 1933.

For more information contact:

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