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## Five Consecutive Months of Above-Average Sales Despite Inventory Woes

There were 1,006 sales reported across the province in November, a 10 per cent year-over-year increase, marking the fifth consecutive month of year-over-year sales increases in Saskatchewan. Much of the monthly sales gains were driven by rising activity in the Regina and Saskatoon Regions. As seen in previous months, year-to-date sales remain well above long-term, 10-year trends, as the province continues to report strong sales.

A slight year-over-year increase in new listings was not enough to offset above-average November sales, causing further retractions in inventory levels, specifically in homes priced below \$400,000. Inventory levels decreased by over 16 per cent on a year-over-year basis and remain over 30 per cent below long-term, 10-year averages.

"Saskatchewan's housing market continues to benefit from a strong economy, record employment and population growth," said Association CEO, Chris Guérette. "These factors, when paired with our relative affordability, continue to support above-average monthly sales and stable demand in home ownership."

The months of supply rose above five months in November, slightly higher than levels reported earlier this year, but still over 40 per cent below the 10-year average. Despite a slight gain in the months of supply compared to October, nearly all of the growth was in higher-priced products, as the more affordable segment of the market continues to face significant inventory challenges.

In line with typical seasonal factors, Saskatchewan reported a slight decrease in the benchmark price of \$324,400 in November, down from \$327,300 in October and up nearly 2 per cent from November 2022.

"Our market continues to outperform many regions across the country, as we once again report strong sales levels and prices that are holding relatively steady," said Guérette. "Where we are similar to

other markets, however, is that we are experiencing persistent inventory challenges, specifically in the more affordable segment of our housing continuum."

### Regional Highlights

Despite monthly fluctuations, year-to-date sales activity eased across all regions in the province in November, with the steepest decline occurring in the Swift Current-Moose Jaw Region. While year-to-date sales have decreased, the Regina-Moose Mountain, Saskatoon-Biggar, Swift Current-Moose Jaw, and Yorkton-Melville Regions are reporting sales well above long-term, 10-year trends. The Saskatoon-Biggar Region continues to experience the tightest conditions across the province, with just over 3.5 months of supply reported in November.

### Price Trends

Benchmark prices varied across the province in November, as the communities of Estevan, Humboldt, Melville, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Weyburn, and Yorkton reported year-over-year price gains. Meanwhile, Meadow Lake, Melfort, North Battleford, Regina, and Swift Current reported year-over-year price declines.

### City of Regina

The City of Regina reported 240 sales in November, up nearly 16 per cent year-over-year and 14 per cent above long-term, 10-year trends. Strong sales and a decline in new listings failed to offer any supply relief in November, as inventory levels were down 21 per cent on a year-over-year basis and remain over 30 per cent below long-term, 10-year trends. With only 3.5 months of supply, Regina continues to experience significant supply challenges in the more affordable segment of the market. Despite strong sales and relatively tight market conditions, the Queen City reported a benchmark price of \$305,000 in November, down from \$308,500 in October and nearly 3 per cent below November 2



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## Stress Management Techniques for the Holiday Season

Stress is common during the holiday season, even in Hallmark movies! Fortunately, there are techniques you can use to help keep stress at bay.

For example, a strategy that many life coaches recommend is to prioritize and reschedule. That simply means prioritizing what's truly important this month — perhaps an upcoming get-together with family — and focusing your energies on that. Then, schedule other lower-priority tasks for later in the month or even into January. This will reduce the stress of trying to do everything at once.

Another technique is to delegate. Who says you have to do it all yourself? Ask other family members to chip in if you have preparations in and around the home. When delegating, assign tasks based on an individual's strengths. For example, give organizing related tasks to the family member who is best at organizing.



Finally, consider creating or identifying a “quiet space” so you have somewhere to retreat to when things get hectic. This can be somewhere in the home, such as a favourite reading nook, or a place away from home, like a local coffee shop. Even a walk around the block can serve as a well-needed respite.

While December can bring about a flurry of tasks, managing stress is about reclaiming the joy and warmth the holiday season is meant to represent. These techniques will help ensure that happens.

## Home Security Tips that Won't Cost you a Fortune

When most people think about home security, they tend to focus on locks, alarms, and cameras. While these safeguards are essential, there are many other things you can do to prevent break-ins — without having to invest a lot of money.

For example, start by reviewing your landscaping. Well maintained landscaping can be a powerful deterrent to burglars. Overgrown trees and bushes provide perfect hiding spots for potential intruders. So, keep shrubs trimmed and ensure tree branches don't

offer easy access to upper-level windows.

Lighting is also important. A well-lit exterior can make your home an unattractive target for burglars. That doesn't mean you need to illuminate your home like



a Christmas tree 24/7! Instead, consider motion-activated lighting. It not only conserves energy but can startle and deter anyone trying to sneak around your property.

There is another simple piece of advice most homeowners know but sometimes forget. If you're away on vacation, don't let your property scream “No one's home!” Hold your mail and newspaper deliveries. Ask a neighbour to pick up flyers dropped at your front door. And, don't advertise your absence on social media by posting holiday pictures while you're away!

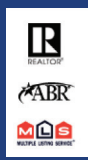
The bottom line: Don't rely entirely on gadgets and systems. Take a more comprehensive approach to home security and you'll have more peace of mind when you're away.



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## Scientists' Recommendations for Staying Motivated in 2024



Sometimes, the goals we set for a new year are just dreams. But, if you're serious about achieving your goals and plans in this new year, you'll need to find a way to stay motivated in your pursuit of them. So, what can you do? Start by creating some momentum. Take the first steps. Then, learn from the science of motivation. Here are some research-backed techniques for staying the course.

- 1. Break it Down:** According to the Zeigarnik Effect, our brains have an easier time processing tasks when they're broken down into smaller steps. So, if you're planning a home renovation, don't just jot down "renovate kitchen." Break it into actionable items like "choose countertop material" or "pick paint colour for cabinets."
- 2. Visualize the End Result:** Studies have shown that regularly visualizing the successful completion of a goal can bolster motivation. Picture your renovated living room or that garden you've been dreaming about. Imagine the compliments from guests and the satisfaction you'll feel.
- 3. Accountability Partners:** A study from the American Society of Training and Development found that people are 65% more likely to complete a goal if they commit to it with another person. So, tell someone!
- 4. Celebrate Small Wins:** Dopamine, often referred to as the "feel-good" neurotransmitter, plays a significant role in motivation. When you achieve a milestone, no matter how small, your brain releases dopamine. Celebrating these small victories not only feels good but also propels you to keep going.
- 5. Stay Educated:** According to the Expectancy Theory, the belief that your efforts will result in success can boost motivation. Read books, attend workshops, or consult experts related to your goal. The more knowledgeable you are, the more confident you'll become in your path to success.

Good luck with your 2024 goals and plans!



## Security Glass and Residential Applications

If you're in the market for secure residential windows, do not presume that words like security, shatter-proof or shatter-resistant mean unbreakable. Take the time to understand various levels of protection in residential windows:

**Glazed Windows** usually refer to actual glass panels that are treated with a film that helps stop the transfer of warm or cool air and may reduce the UV effects of sunlight. They are not usually associated with security.

**Tempered Glass** is heat-treated for strength, but is not strong enough to withstand significant impact. Rather, when broken, it disintegrates into small pieces instead of shards, making it less likely to do harm to those nearby.

**Laminated Glass** is glass with one or more layers applied to its surface for various reasons, such as insulation and UV protection. When security window film is applied, it can be strong enough to delay attempted intrusion through window breakage.

**Polycarbonate Panels** provide many quality features of glass, but are in fact much stronger. They are often preferred by high-end retailers because they offer greater resistance to impact, deterring most or all break and entry attempts.



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## Thinking through Renovations

If we've learned one thing about renovations during the past few years, it's that things can change unexpectedly. That doesn't mean you should stop dreaming about a major home improvement or abandon that next big project on the horizon. But, it does mean that researching and planning are all the more critical when trying to establish reasonable timelines and manageable budgets. Start with a review of your main objectives – are you looking to create comfort, aesthetics or efficiencies? Do you expect to improve your property's value? Your established priorities will help you remain flexible, in the event of unpredictable market shifts.

These days, skilled labour, raw materials and manufactured supplies are all susceptible to market shortages, so it's important to select a contractor with a reliable network of resources. Clarify your choices, get deadlines in writing, and know the difference between estimates and quotations.

To further protect your renovation investment,

consider incentives for completed stages – and penalties for delays. When faced with obstacles, be prepared to accept alternative options. Finally, keep aside a private contingency budget to accommodate unexpected circumstances – but don't pay for anything in advance unless it's for agreed-upon materials.



## Emergency Preparedness Kits

With each passing season, unexpected regional emergencies catch families and households off-guard. Unfortunately, advance warnings aren't always able to provide enough time to adequately prepare for sudden tornadoes, hurricanes, floods or fire. Furthermore, these events can trigger extensive power outages and fuel disruptions that last for days. That's why experts recommend that all homes have emergency preparedness kits. At the very least, it's wise to have a "grab-and-go" backpack at the ready, containing essentials to survive a minimum of 12

to 24 hours. That means water and energy bars, medications, weatherproof outerwear, cash and a powered-up phone charger.

If you have a vehicle, it should always be fuelled up and ready to go in the event of an unexpected evacuation. Always

keep a first aid kit, blankets, matches, a flashlight, batteries and a portable radio in your vehicle. You might also want

the option to hunker down at home for days. Invest in a portable generator and store dried and canned foods, plus an adequate volume of bottled drinking water. Regardless of your survival plan, consider purchases like plywood to protect your windows, before they're in demand. Also, ensure your phone has your photos backed up and has weblinks and protected passwords to access safely stored and encrypted bank account information, insurance policies and government documents.

