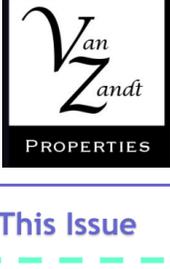




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April 2020

[A Note from Ann:](#)

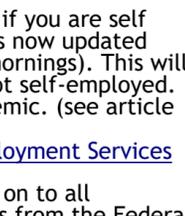
I hope this finds everyone well! These are crazy times we're living in! The Coronavirus has changed our worlds completely. Real Estate is still considered an "Essential Service" in Bastrop County, so we are able to still perform our jobs. However, we ask that if it is not necessary that you buy/sell/look immediately that you postpone your activity until this is over to keep from unnecessarily spreading the virus. We are available through phone/email/texts and can do a virtual walk through of a home for you if needed. Otherwise we will practice safe distancing and sanitization. There is a form you can sign for the owner giving them the comfort that you are not infected and have not travelled recently.

We've all been impacted in one way or another. There is help available that some may not be aware of. I'd like to help you with what I know at this time:

- You can apply for Unemployment Insurance even if you are self employed or an independent contractor. TWC has now updated their website to allow you file online (try early mornings). This will not affect your employer in any way if you are not self-employed. The chargebacks will be waived due to the pandemic. (see article below) Apply here: [Texas Workforce Commission Unemployment Services](#)
- There will be an additional \$600 per week added on to all recipients of Unemployment automatically (this is from the Federal Government). Here's good info: [Governor Announces Stimulus Package](#)
- There are several options for Small Business Loans (some forgiven) - all eligible for self-employed and contract labor.
 - Payroll Protection Program: This will give you 2 1/2 times your payroll. It will be forgiven so long as 75% of the loan is used for payroll and you keep your employees on or plan to rehire them. (cannot use this and unemployment obviously, as you will be getting/giving paychecks).
 - Economic Injury Disaster Loans: This one give you up to \$10,000 for loss of business and does not have to be repaid. However, I have read that if you use the Payroll protections plan above as well as the Disaster Loan they will not forgive the disaster loan. It may be better to use unemployment and the disaster loan. Do your research and see what works best for you.
 - Here's the link for the above programs: [Small Business Loans](#)

Most mortgage companies and auto financing companies are offering you the option to furlough (put off payments till you're up and running again) - OR even better, add the payments to the end of your mortgage, giving you relief of paying them for up to 3 months. Credit card companies and utilities are doing the same. Call everyone you pay if you need the help.

There's a lot available to help us through these trying times. Make sure you get the help you need so we can all come out strong and ready to get back to business when this is all over. Do your research to determine what's best for you. Stay well and stay safe! See you on the other side!

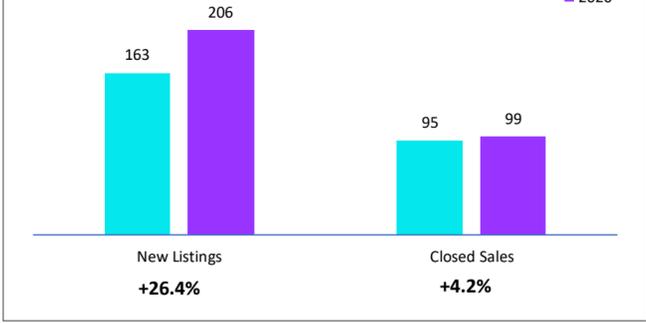
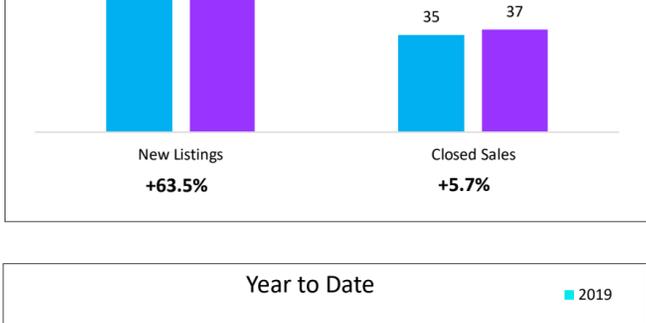


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[Bastrop Area Monthly Statistics](#)

Below are the current statistics for the Bastrop Area. The average home sale price for March was \$266,774, which is up 9.9% from the previous year. The average home sale price for 2020, so far, is \$260,073, which is up 13% from 2019.



[Spring Things](#)

Spring is a great time to do a quick tune up of your home and to take a moment to make sure your home is humming along. Here's a quick checklist of fixes to make now to save you time and money later.



Interior

- Check seals around windows, doors and bathtubs.
- Drain your water heater.
- Check and fix leaky faucets.
- Replace your HVAC filters.
- Clean out your dryer vent.
- Replace batteries in smoke detectors.
- Make sure you have a working fire extinguisher.
- Check basement walls for moisture or mold.
- Vacuum refrigerator condenser coils.

Exterior

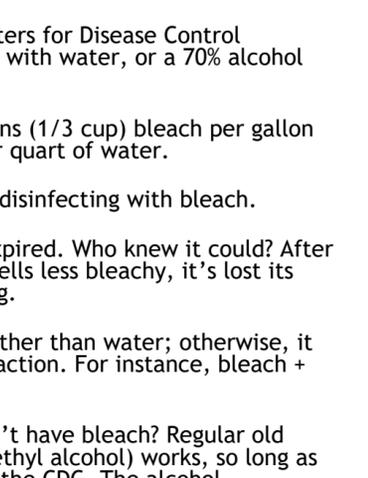
- Inspect the roof.
- Clean the gutters.
- Wash window exteriors and check screens for repairs.
- Check driveway and walks for repairs.
- Inspect deck and patio for warped, molded or splintered boards.
- Trim bushes and trees, or any vegetation near an air conditioning unit in particular.
- Remove leaves and other debris from lawn.
- Patch up your home's paint job.
- Look for cracks or weak spots along the lower section of the exterior.

[How to Disinfect Your Home in the Time of Coronavirus](#)

By: [Christina Hoffmann](#)

A bleach solution or rubbing alcohol is your best bet for keeping your home sanitized. There's everyday clean, guest clean, and then there's COVID-19 clean.

Let's get down to the nitty gritty, literally, and focus on how to disinfect your home. To combat this virus, you'll want your big guns: bleach, rubbing alcohol, and hot water.



The Best Disinfectants

For your high-touch surfaces, the Centers for Disease Control recommends a bleach solution diluted with water, or a 70% alcohol solution.

Follow this bleach recipe: 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water, or 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of water.

Make sure to properly ventilate when disinfecting with bleach.

And check to see if your bleach has expired. Who knew it could? After about 9 months to a year, and if it smells less bleachy, it's lost its disinfecting power. Time for a new jug.

Tip: Don't mix bleach with anything other than water; otherwise, it could set off a dangerous chemical reaction. For instance, bleach + alcohol is a deadly combo.

How to disinfect your home if you don't have bleach? Regular old rubbing alcohol (isopropyl alcohol or ethyl alcohol) works, so long as it's at least 70% alcohol, according to the CDC. The alcohol concentration will be listed on the bottle. Rubbing alcohol you buy should already be diluted, unlike bleach.

Is There a Such a Thing as Too Much Disinfectant?

According to an EPA fact sheet, studies have found that using some disinfectant products can cause germs to become resistant.

The EPA has issued a list of disinfectants on the market that it believes are effective in killing COVID-19. Look for the EPA registration number on the product and check it against this list to ensure you have a match.

Erica Marie Hartman, an environmental microbiologist at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., whose research focuses on resistance, confirms soap, bleach, and alcohol are your best bets.

What about the various disinfecting wipes on the market (at least if you can find them)? Hartman says the active ingredient in many of those is an ammonium compound, which could become resistant to viruses over time.

Surfaces That Need Your Attention

With your preferred disinfectant, wipe down high-touch surfaces like doorknobs, light switches, tables, remotes, banisters, toilets, sinks, and faucets daily or more often, if someone in your home is sick.

Contact time is another key aspect of surface sanitizing. "Disinfection isn't instantaneous," says Hartman. [For a bleach solution], you want to leave it on the surface for 10 minutes before wiping it off. "

By the way, new research from scientists at the National Institutes of Health, among other agencies, shows that at least some coronavirus can live for up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to three days on plastic and stainless steel.

But a report in "The Washington Post" notes that the most likely period for infection from the virus on surfaces is in the first 10 minutes to one or two hours.

Not All Floors Can Handle Bleach

For your nonporous floors, like those in the bathroom, the CDC recommends mopping with the bleach solution.

Avoid bleach on hardwood and other porous floors because of staining. Instead, use a disinfecting wet mop cloth without bleach.

Cleaning Isn't Disinfecting

From the you-might-be-surprised files: Disinfecting with bleach isn't actually cleaning. If you also need to clean your countertops of dirt and grime, do that first with soap and water. Then use the bleach solution or rubbing alcohol to combat the virus.

Killing Microbes on Clothes

Most washing machines today do a bang-up job on dirty clothes with cold water, which is best for energy savings. But, and especially if you have a sick person in your house, the hot-water setting followed by a high-heat dry for about a 1/2 hour to 45 minutes is best for virus eradication. thoroughly dry.

Don't forget about your laundry hamper. Wipe it down like you would other surfaces. You can also use a reusable liner bag, which you can launder with the clothes.

What If I'm Selling My House, and Inviting More Germs In?

How to disinfect your home when it's for sale? Talk to your agent who will work with you to establish a hygienic showing protocol, including requiring visitors to wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer when they arrive, and to remove shoes or wear booties before entering. Removing shoes not only reduces dirt coming in, but potentially germs.

In addition, some agents are reporting that they've eliminated open houses to avoid group situations.

After showings, practice your surface wipe-down routine.

Finally, when you work with disinfectants, practice some self care. "Alcohol and bleach can be very aggressive on your skin, so wearing rubber gloves can help protect your hands," Hartman says.

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