



# THE HOMEOWNER

Spring 2020



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## The price of a home in Canada increased 2.2% in Q4 2019

According to the Royal LePage House Price Survey<sup>1</sup>, the aggregate price of a home in Canada increased 2.2 per cent year-over-year to \$648,544 in the fourth quarter of 2019. Similar to the third quarter, potential buyers are continuing to come back to the real estate market. In the first half of 2019, buyers had remained largely at the sidelines waiting to gauge the potential impact of the federal mortgage stress test.

“The federal government has signaled that changes could come to the mortgage stress test mechanism in 2020,” said Phil Soper, president and CEO, Royal LePage. “The stress test pushed people out of real estate markets across Canada temporarily. For the most part, buyers have adjusted, yet it still represents a significant hurdle as families pursue the dream of owning their own home.”

Soper added that the impact of the regulations-driven drop in demand is felt very differently in different parts of the country.

“We believe policy makers have the necessary experience to modify the tool to meet the reality of today’s Canada – that we have very different and varied economies, and by extension housing policy needs, from region to region,” said Soper.

The Royal LePage National House Price Composite is compiled from proprietary property data in 64 of the nation’s largest real estate markets. When broken out by housing type, the median price of a two-storey home rose 2.3 per cent year-over-year to \$761,817, while the median price of a bungalow increased modestly by 0.7 per cent to \$537,622.

Across Canada, condominiums remained the fastest appreciating housing type, with the median price rising 3.3 per cent year-over-year to \$487,525. Largely, condominium data is weighted towards the country’s largest urban centres where the majority of them are found. The median price of a condominium rose 7.8 per cent year-over-year to \$565,919 in the Greater Toronto Area and 4.4 per cent year-over-year in the Greater Montreal Area to \$338,148 during the fourth quarter. However, national price gains were offset by year-over-year declines in Greater Vancouver’s real estate market where the median price of a condominium decreased 3.4 per cent to \$645,607.

For more regional analysis, visit [rlp.ca/mediaroom](http://rlp.ca/mediaroom).

To view the chart with aggregated regions and markets visit [rlp.ca/houseprices](http://rlp.ca/houseprices).

<sup>1</sup> Aggregate prices are calculated using a weighted average of the median values of all housing types collected. Data is provided by RPS Real Property Solutions.

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# Spring cleaning 101

During the winter thaw, indoor upkeep is as important as prepping your garden for spring. Freshen rooms, remove allergens, and brighten the look of these five areas:

1

## Windows and treatments

While cleaning glass, wipe grime from sills and frames. Take this opportunity to wash drapes and remove dust from blinds.

2

## HVAC vents

Thoroughly vacuum and dust these areas. If anyone in your household has severe allergies or asthma, consider hiring a professional duct cleaning service to remove buildup that can encourage mould growth and dust mites.



3

## Furniture and walls

Wipe down walls and use a small brush to clean accent areas where dirt hides. Spot clean hard-to-reach places and previously unseen splatters, crayon markings, and grease marks.

4

## Carpets and upholstery

Floor coverings need regular attention from your vacuum – sweep up “dust bunnies” and cobwebs from every corner and mop any exposed flooring. Carefully apply sprays or cleaning products to remove stains (after testing in an inconspicuous area). It may also be time for a thorough shampooing – rent a professional machine to sanitize the padding underneath and remove moisture.

5

## Ceiling Fans

Dust blades before turning them on – otherwise, you might undo all the work you’ve done cleaning the rest of the room!

Unseen allergy irritants and mould can reduce a home’s value.

Make an annual date to “detail” your house, you’ll keep it in prime condition for years to come.



# Moving out? Try these packing tips

**Protect.** Important papers and belongings with sentimental value should be collected and set aside. Paint and chemicals can be hazardous to box and put on a moving truck. Designate a special area to store these items as it is best to transport them yourself, if possible.

**Prioritize.** Don't make the mistake of letting everything get loaded on the truck in a random order. Even if you label the boxes, there's no guarantee the items you need first will be accessible once your movers are done. Mark them as "last on/first off." These would include bed linens and pillows, kitchen supplies, dishes, cups and cutlery, and bathroom necessities.

**Label.** Take the extra step of using coloured labels or stickers to mark which ones are priority for unpacking. This will help you get started after you're in your new place. Also, when wrapping delicacies, put a piece of coloured tissue paper around smaller items. This will prevent you from accidentally tossing something tiny when you're unwrapping bigger breakables.

**Secure.** Even if you're moving liquids yourself, create an extra barrier by sealing them with plastic wrap, then securing lids and caps tightly on top. This tip can prevent spillage onto more expensive items.

Enjoy your new home by making unpacking as stress-free as possible!

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# Savings for summer

Now's the time to prevent costly repairs and energy leaks. Take time to examine your home's exterior and you'll save this summer, once the heat hits.

**Roof and gutters.** Clean drains, gutters, and downspouts to keep those April showers from pooling near your foundation. Replace missing or loose shingles and check for any damage that may spread or cause weakness.

**Windows and doors.** Check that seals are tight and there are no cracks, tears, or gaps in caulking or weather-stripping that allow your refrigerated air to escape.

**Dryer vent.** Keep the airway clear by temporarily removing the vent cover located outside the house, vacuum all debris.

**AC unit.** Turn off the power to the outside unit, then get it ready to handle the summer workload. Clear away any plant or weed growth. Hose off or vacuum the condenser's sides. If you haven't had an inspection for a season or two, call your local HVAC professional to check parts and connections.

A few tiny efforts can make a world of difference for your energy bill and maximize efficiency.







## Sahara Desert Challenge for Shelter

raises record-setting \$1.1 million!

One hundred and twenty Royal LePage professionals recently journeyed to Morocco from communities across Canada to participate in the Sahara Desert Challenge for Shelter. Over five days, they hiked more than 100 kilometres across hard and rocky terrain, supporting each other along the way. They climbed sand dunes hundreds of metres high and withstood hours of walking in blistering heat. At night, the temperatures dipped to near freezing while they slept restlessly in their tents, their bodies aching from the effort. The physical and emotional strain put on the trekkers was immense, but it couldn't compare to what women and children escaping domestic violence experience – the very women and children who were the driving force behind this adventure.

To participate in the Sahara Desert Challenge for Shelter, each trekker committed to raise at least \$5,000 for the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation and cover their own travel and trekking expenses. To the amazement of Foundation staff, **this outstanding group of fundraisers blew past their fundraising goal, ultimately raising \$1,136,000!** Eighty percent of the funds raised were directed to emergency women's shelters and transition houses across Canada. The remaining twenty percent will fund prevention and education programs aimed at breaking the cycle of family violence.

"The Sahara Desert Challenge for Shelter is an outstanding example of how Royal LePage professionals come together to support their local communities," says Shanan Spencer-Brown, Executive Director, Royal LePage Shelter Foundation. "The trekkers put in considerable time and effort to fundraise, prepare by hiking long distances at home, and then travel across the world to take part in the Challenge. Across Canada, many other Royal LePagers made donations to support the cause. It was truly a team effort."

The three Challenge for Shelter treks in support of the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation (Machu Picchu, Iceland and Sahara Desert) have now raised \$2.3 million. To view a collection of photos from the most recent adventure, please visit [rlp.ca/saharafortshelter](http://rlp.ca/saharafortshelter).



## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual National Garage Sale for Shelter Saturday, May 9, 2020

### Mark your calendars!

Held at Royal LePage offices and on front yards and driveways across Canada, the National Garage Sale for Shelter raises critical funds for local women's shelters that offer safety and support to thousands of women and children fleeing domestic violence each year.

Since 2009, the National Garage Sale for Shelter has raised over \$3 million for women's shelters across the country. Because Royal LePage Canada covers the foundation's administrative costs and sponsors underwrite event expenses, 100% of all funds raised go directly to this important cause.

### How can you help?

Please donate gently used items to a participating Royal LePage office and visit the National Garage Sale for Shelter in your community to shop for great deals and unique treasures. You'll be helping women and children escape abuse and create a future that is safe and full of hope.

For more information, please contact the Royal LePage office in your community or email [shelterfoundation@royallepage.ca](mailto:shelterfoundation@royallepage.ca).

