



## LIVING GREENER

How does Calgary stack up when it comes to recycling?

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## LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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## AROUND THE HOUSE

## We're mystified by mortgage

**STUDY** • Everyone knows what they paid for their home, but few Canadians know what their house costs.

A recent study shows that only one in five homeowners know what their home will ultimately cost them due to interest payments on their mortgage. Interest payments add 151 to 200 per cent of the original loan amount over the course of a 25-year mortgage says TransUnion, a credit and information management firm.

When asked to put a figure on the lifetime cost of a mortgage, the survey found that 45 per cent of Canadians underestimated that cost. According to Tom Reid, director of consumer solutions at TransUnion, a 25-year term traditional fixed-rate mortgage at 6.43 per cent for \$200,000 will cost that same amount in interest.

The study found that homeowners had no greater knowledge-base on mortgage costs than those who do not own a home, with 20 per cent of both giving the correct answer.

The study was conducted by GfK Roper Public Affairs and Media in which a total of 1,000 interviews were made among Canadian adults who were contacted through random digit dialing.

— Joanne Hatherly, CanWest News Service

## A fresher facade

**CURB APPEAL** • Nobody wants to paint the home's exterior when it's 30C outside. But once this heat wave crashes, grab a brush and give the house a fresh look with these outdoor painting tips from Benjamin Moore.

1. Identify your home's "fixed elements" and work around them. A new paint colour must blend with parts of the home that can't easily be changed, such as the roofing, masonry, brickwork or eaves and downspouts.

2. Take stock of neighbouring homes. "The trick is to blend in and stand out at the same time" when redoing a hue, says Scarlett Ballantyne, colour expert for Benjamin Moore.

3. Go for contrast. A dark home with light trim (or vice versa) will draw your eye to the details.

4. At the very least, give the front door a makeover. Paint it yellow, purple, red or green; a bold colour adds punch.

5. Choose a sunny day with a forecast high of about 21C for best results.

Heed the following advice:

■ Clean and smooth over surfaces prior to painting.

■ Remember primer first.

■ Paint from the top down to prevent drips and spatters from mucking up previously painted parts.

■ Save the trim for last.

— Calgary Herald



Courtesy, Benjamin Moore

## BABY BOOM



Sarah Deveau says her daughter Kate Kucharski's Grobag sleep sack and Sleep Sheep are two nursery must-haves to help her two-year-old sleep soundly.

## Sarah Deveau, 29

**KIDS:** Kate, 2 (left), Baby No. 2 is due in February. As owner of Cater Tot Consignment in Airdrie, a store that carries all manner of baby-related goods, Deveau knows what items parents swear by — and also the stuff that gets bought but never used. "Baby needs things that are functional," she says.

## top 3 must-haves

1. Sleep sack. Deveau swears by daughter Kate's Grobag sleep sack. She can't kick it off in the middle of the night and it prevents her from leveraging her legs to climb out of the crib. Since blankets aren't recommended for newborns, sleep sacks provide warmth, safety and security.
2. White noise source. You can't control your neighbour's barking dog, but you can block it out with a noise machine or fan, says Deveau. Kate cuddles a Sleep Sheep lovey that stashes a small noise machine. It can be set to play whale, rain, ocean or river sounds for 20- or 45-minute intervals.
3. L-shaped nursing pillow. A proper pillow with a high fill will lift baby up to the right height for comfortable nursing or bottle feeding. Deveau suggests buying one halfway through the pregnancy to use as a body pillow at night.

## give these over-rated items a pass

1. Newborn outfits/shoes. Fussy to put on and often outgrown before they can be worn, baby get-ups rarely make an appearance, says Deveau. And unless they're Robeez slippers, "Shoes just don't fit babies very well."
2. Extravagant gizmos such as wipe warmers or bottle sterilizers. No baby's tush is that sensitive and few moms are such germ-o-phobes they continue using a sterilizer after the first month. Say no to these purchases as they'll end up first in the storage closet and later on sale at her consignment store, says Deveau.

SEE WHAT OTHER MOMS THINK, PAGE G2

Colleen De Neve, Calgary Herald

## Nursery necessities

Does a baby really need a bottle warmer or a diaper stacker? Probably not. Four Calgary moms have learned what they can't live without and what's over-rated

LISA KADANE  
CALGARY HERALD

"When are you due?", "Do you know what you're having?" and "Is the nursery ready?" are the first three questions pregnant women get asked. It's a fairly common line of questioning these days in baby boom central.

Calgary's most recent census showed that 15,721 bundles of joy were delivered between April 2006 and April 2007, up 1,000 from the previous year. That equates to thousands of newborns in need of cushy baby digs.

Ah, the baby's room; that too-cute space primed for pastels, stuffed animals and frilly or little-man outfits for the zero-to-

three-month set.

Busy moms strive to furnish it with the bare essentials, and decorate it with a gender-appropriate (or neutral) theme, before baby arrives. Because, realistically, beyond a bed, monitor, diaper disposal system and colour scheme, what does a baby really need in his or her new crib?

Plenty, local baby stores and online retailers will have you believe. Most hand out, or post, nursery checklists, so new moms won't forget to buy a diaper stacker, bottle warmer and mobile when they're in purchasing a nursing pillow.

Before you wonder aloud, "What's a diaper stacker?," take heart. The Herald talked to four local moms to get the low-down on nursery must-haves, as well as over-rated accessories they can live without.

## RENOVATING

## Reno guru wants to make it right in Alberta

YVONNE JEFFERY  
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

Mike Holmes is taking his television show, *Holmes on Homes*, on the road — literally. HGTV's favourite fix-it guy is in Alberta this week, working on a reno-gone-bad not far from Calgary.

The road shows are new, a way to reach out to homeowners outside the Greater Toronto area where the show is usually filmed. The call for renovation disasters went out in April, and the response, he

says by phone from the work-site, was overwhelming.

"I'd call it depressing, there are that many stories about people in trouble," he says.

With residential and commercial construction at record levels, the best contractors are busy — but so are the rest. And it's the latter that you need to worry about.

"If a problem arises with your job, they're going to shut it down with you and move on to the next job," Holmes says.

"Pros don't do that: they schedule everything right, and they care about the job

## Lean on Me Day

Mike Holmes and country music star Charlie Major are at the Home Depot's Beacon Hill location (11320 Sarcee Trail N.W.; 374-3860) this afternoon, starting at 1 p.m. For more on Holmes and his Foundation, go to [www.holmesonhomes.com](http://www.holmesonhomes.com).

they do."

The renovation he's working on this week was a 21-square-metre addition that Holmes says isn't all bad.

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Photo, courtesy Stephanie Liang

Mike Holmes and Charlie Major are appearing at the Beacon Hill Home Depot this afternoon for "Lean on Me" Day.

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