



PORTLAND

FEBRUARY 2011

Angie's list®

Topping techniques
bad for trees, homeowners

BUZZcuts

page 12



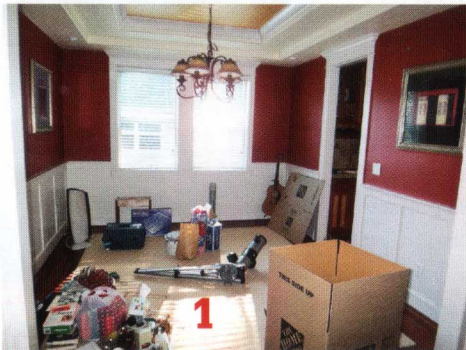
Tattoo no longer you? | page 26
Laser removal can be costly, but effective

Just between us | page 34
Why detailed reports are important

Setting the stage

by Ingrid Cummings

"ONLY 10 PERCENT of people shopping for a new home have the vision to imagine their own belongings in another house," says **Maureen Bray, owner of Portland, Ore.-based Room Solutions Staging**. Bray is one of two highly rated professional home stagers we consulted, who both agree that staging helps prospective buyers make that imaginative leap. "Homes that have been staged sell faster than those that haven't," Bray says. "Twenty-eight days versus 125 days."



1 "Note the clutter," Bray says. "It sucks all the energy out of a room and prevents buyers from noticing a home's features."

2 "Setting the table allows buyers to imagine entertaining family and friends in this space, creating that important emotional connection," Bray says.



Expect to pay \$150 to \$500 for a home-staging consultation, and an additional \$1,500-\$2,500 to provide the furnishings and accessories necessary to stage four main rooms if the home is vacant.



TIP: Always banish evidence of pets (feeding dishes, beds, toys) when your home is on the market.

Left page and above: Photo courtesy of Room Solutions Staging LLC

"In today's market, 90% of any sale is an emotional attachment to the house. Staging encourages that."

— Pam Fox,
Artistic Staging & Design

3 "Potential buyers are often skeptical that their large bed and two nightstands would fit in a bedroom," Bray says. "A bed already in place proves the point."

4 "Use minimalist window treatments to highlight your view," Bray adds.

5 "Don't over-furnish rooms," Bray warns. "Staging isn't about decorating; it is about highlighting a home's best features."



Photo courtesy of Artistic Staging & Design LLC

6 "Use a lot of greenery," says Pam Fox, president of highly rated Artistic Staging & Design in Tampa, Fla. "In today's market, selling a house is a price war and a beauty contest."

7 This older home was considered a tough sale, but Fox helped the real estate agent succeed. "We had the woodwork painted and cracks in the drywall repaired," Fox says. ☺