



“We’ve Got You Covered”

Keeping You Insured, Enlightened and Informed!

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Do Cut-Price Homes = Cheaper Insurance?

Tumbling house prices may have you wondering whether homeowners' insurance premiums will fall too.

Fair question. But the answer is not as straightforward as you might think. Although median house prices in the US are down around 7% year on year, don't expect to be able to cut your premiums by the same amount.

For a start, your homeowners' policy covers a lot more than your structure. It probably also covers contents – and the value of those is more likely to have gone up than down – and third party liability.

But the most critical factor in evaluating your cover is that the buildings element of your policy should not be based purely on the market value of your home but more importantly on the cost of reconstructing it.

Although these are hard times for builders, there's no real evidence that construction costs have fallen. In fact, industry experts reckon that as many as two thirds of American homes may be undervalued for rebuilding purposes.

That means, it makes sense, one way or the other, to regularly check that your homeowners' policy accurately reflects the cost of rebuilding it. There are several ways:

- Many insurers keep records on rebuilding costs and automatically adjust policies to reflect changes.
- Talk to us. Insurance agents have their finger on the pulse and know how to get the information you need.
- There are a number of online calculators which claim to be able to produce accurate figures. If you use these, you're best to crosscheck between several. Beware: some of them charge for the service.
- You can ask a builder to do a walk-through with you and estimate the reconstruction cost.

You can pay an appraiser to do a full inspection.

Bottom line: lower real estate values are unlikely to offer much opportunity to cut your homeowners' premium, though there are other ways to tackle this, such as agreeing to pay a higher deductible or using the same insurer for auto as well as property cover.

Again, please talk to us about this.

INSPIRING
QUOTE OF
THE
MONTH:

"If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere."

-- Frank A. Clark

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INSPIRATIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL

The Dos and Don'ts of Keeping Fit

Did you stick with your resolution to get fit for 2010? Or maybe you're starting to think about this year's vacation and last year's shorts.

Can they work together?

Is it time to mount the treadmill or reactivate gym membership? How much exercise you need depends on two key factors – your age and your general state of health.

Obviously, you should always seek medical advice before launching an exercise regime, but a few general tips can help most of us:

Be regular: Frequent, steady exercise is better than occasional intensive bursts. An hour's walk, 4 days a week is a guideline for a healthy person.

Be calm: Workouts don't need to be – indeed shouldn't be in some cases – strenuous or exhausting. Just keep moving.

Be comfortable: Don't wear tight clothing or footwear and don't exercise immediately after eating; a stroll may be okay.

Be aware: Measure your performance and monitor your body. Using a pedometer and wearing a heart monitor can help you stay within limits.

Following these simple rules can help you get fit and stay there – without overdoing it. Bring on the shorts!



10 Things Your Auto Insurer Won't Tell You, Part 1

Updated and adapted from the book, "1,001 Things They Won't Tell You: An Insider's Guide to Spending, Saving, and Living Wisely," by Jonathan Dahl and the editors of SmartMoney.

1. "When I say this is a good policy, I mean it's good for me."

While agents can help you navigate auto policies, some may not have your best interest at heart: Often, large auto and home insurers use "contingent commissions" to compensate agents who sold their policies. The concern is that unscrupulous agents push certain policies to reap larger commissions. How to protect yourself? Ask about commissions, and have prospective agents explain their recommendations.

2. "Young drivers can't catch a break."

Statistics show that drivers under age 25, especially males, have difficulty getting insured. It typically takes 3 years of driving experience to be quoted a lower rate, according to AllInsuranceInfo.org's site. But there are other ways to ensure a better rate in the short term. For example, avoid sports cars and opt for a car with a lower engine capacity. Some insurers will give a lower rate to young drivers who complete a defensive driving course.

3. "Spotty credit? That'll cost you."

Since the 1990s, insurers have discovered a strong correlation between low credit scores and filing lots of claims. Today, more than 90 percent of insurers use credit history in their underwriting. Although consumer advocates argue that it unfairly penalizes the poor, it can also bite the middle class. After all, 87 percent of families in bankruptcy are there because of a job loss, medical catastrophe, or divorce. Since many insurers do factor in credit history, it's important to get your credit report from each of the three bureaus—TransUnion, Experian, and Equifax—and check them for errors before you shop for insurance.

4. "How do we set premiums? That's for us to know and you to find out."

As insurers continue to adopt complex pricing systems, not everyone is seeing savings. Why the disparity? For starters, premiums vary widely by state and formulas are used to set premiums for individuals. Over the past decade, hundreds of variables have been added to the formulas, including credit history, homeownership, and limits on past policies. Since each insurer interprets these variables differently, it's even tougher for consumers to get a handle on the system.

5. "Your repaired car might look and run like new, but it's worth a lot less."

As many policyholders know, when the other party's insurer is paying for repairs after an accident, you have the right to opt for original manufacturer parts instead of generic aftermarket ones. A fully-repaired vehicle will often be worth less as a used car or trade-in than an identical car without the accident history. Even if you can't collect diminished value, you can probably write it off on your tax return. It's a good idea to hire a post repair inspector, both to ensure that the work was done properly.

At Mallory Agency, we are looking out for you— not our own pockets. Please check out Part 2 of this article in next month's newsletter and call or email us with any questions.



Recipes for Your Valentine



Bourbon-Glazed Salmon

Ingredients

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 6 tablespoons bourbon
- 1/4 cup low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons grated peeled fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 8 (6-ounce) salmon fillets (about 1 inch thick)
- Cooking spray
- 4 teaspoons sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

Preparation

Combine the first 8 ingredients in a large zip-top plastic bag; add salmon fillets. Seal bag, and marinate in refrigerator 30 minutes, turning bag once. Remove fillets from bag; discard marinade.

Preheat broiler.

Place fillets on broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Broil 11 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Sprinkle each fillet with 1/2 teaspoon sesame seeds and 1 tablespoon onions.

Yield: 8 servings

Crispy Chocolate Hearts

Ingredients

- 1 (12-ounce) package semisweet chocolate morsels
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 2 cups crisp rice cereal
- 1 1/2 cups peanuts
- 1 1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 2 (2-ounce) chocolate bark coating squares, melted
- White nonpareils (optional)

Preparation

Microwave chocolate morsels in a large glass bowl at HIGH for 2 minutes or until melted, stirring every 30 seconds. Stir in peanut butter, stirring until well

blended. Stir in cereal, peanuts, and marshmallows. Line a 13- x 9-inch pan with foil. Lightly grease foil. Press mixture into foil-lined pan. Drizzle with chocolate. Sprinkle with white nonpareils, if desired. Let stand 1 hour or until firm; cut with a 3-inch heart-shaped cookie cutter to make hearts. Store hearts in an airtight container or place in a candy box, if desired.

Note: White nonpareils (tiny decorative beads) are available in cake decorating shops or large supermarkets.

Yield: 1 1/2 pounds

A NOT-SO-TRIVIAL PURSUIT

Each month we will give you a new Trivia Contest and offer you a **chance to win a prize from the "Mallory Vault"**. Just one correct answer (or nearly correct) and you could be this month's winner! The entry that comes closest to the correct answer will be the winner. If more than one person has the exact answer, the winner will be the person whose entry reached our office first. Write down your name and answer, and then fax to:

(706) 884-8039 or (877) 237-2843.

**You can even mail the answer to us at:
Mallory Agency, P. O. Box 1209
LaGrange, GA 30241.**

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Valentine's Day evolved from what ancient Roman festival?

Your Name: _____

Your Answer: _____

Congratulations to Janice Iannarelli, who was the first to correctly answer the trivia question from our last newsletter! (Answer: 78 or 364)



Ride For Rick

JOIN US FOR A MOTORCYCLE BENEFIT RIDE FOR RICK MASSIE, A TROUP COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTY WHO WAS INVOLVED IN A HEAD ON CRASH WHILE ON DUTY IN OCT. 2008 AND SUFFERED SEVERE INJURIES.

\$25.00 PER BIKE. RIDE BEGINS AT DIVERSE POWER PARKING LOT IN LAGRANGE. LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED BY KATIE'S AT NOON. KICKSTANDS UP AT 12:45. DONATIONS BY NON-RIDERS ACCEPTED.

RICK MASSIE WILL BE THERE, COME BY AND THANK HIM FOR HIS SERVICE TO TROUP COUNTY.

RIDE ORGANIZERS: CHRIS CLEAVELAND AT 706-302-5878 AND BEN THOMPSON



S E E W H A T O U R C U S T O M E R S S A Y A B O U T U S !

"Our company has saved over \$3,000 by letting Mallory Agency handle our coverage. They agents are knowledgeable and very pleasant to work with. We are pleased with the Mallory Agency service."

Tammy Crenshaw, Dukes, Electric, LaGrange, GA

"By insuring with Mallory Insurance Co, I saved \$256.00 per year on my automobile insurance. I have had my homeowners insurance with Mallory over 30 years and always had excellent service. Thank You!"

P. Seale Hipp, LaGrange, GA

"We were able to save money by switching to you from an online provider for our auto insurance. So now we get the best price and local service too!"

John Coniglio, LaGrange, GA

"I have been a loyal customer of the Mallory Agency for 20 years, due to the high quality of customer service I have received from all the agents I have been associated with. I know they always have my best interest in meeting my insurance needs."

Sheryl Melton, LaGrange, GA

"Mallory Agency has always been very helpful, courteous and knowledgeable with all my insurance needs whether it was business or personal."

Ben Yates, LaGrange, GA

"I have carried my insurance with Mallory Agency for over 10 years. They continue to look over my insurance needs in a professional manner. In May of 2006 they saved me \$3,770 on my Workers Compensation. I am very happy!"

Christy Bennett, Bennett Enviro Solution, Moreland, GA

**THANK YOU SO MUCH TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS.
YOUR BUSINESS AND SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**



100 Year Anniversary 1907-2007

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
www.malloryagency.com

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A G E N C Y**

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