

After Hurricane Sandy: Preparing Your Home For a Move

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Hurricane Sandy has swept through the East Coast. People are slowly coming out of their homes to survey damage to their homes, businesses, and cities. For those people who have the time, they can slowly rebuild. But for others, they are part of the 13% in the country who are planning to move in 2013 or even being aggressive and still planning to move later this year). Considering that Hurricane Sandy most likely brought flooding and water damage to your home, we have focused on clean-up tips for water damage and how to talk with your agent about pricing your home. The tips below are a guide for making sure your home is in the best shape possible to be sold following this harrowing storm and you are ready for your move.

1) Clean Your House Following Water Damage

You will need to check your home to see if there is significant damage to the floors and drywall. If the damage is severe, you will need to call a professional like a mold remediation specialist. If your home sustained limited damage, there are a lot of things you can do yourself. You can use buckets, mops, and wet/dry vacuums to take out the water from your home. Then you can use heaters, fans, and dehumidifiers to take the moisture out of the air.

2) Sort Through Items In Your Home After Potential Damage

Survey your home and look for items that could have retained water damage. For clothes and bedding, try to get these items out of the home and washed as quickly as possible to prevent against mold. For porous items like soft furnishings, carpet, beds, pillows, and soft toys, it's going to be really hard to keep any of these items if they took in a lot of water. For non-porous items with hard surfaces like pots and

pans, jewelry, and plates, they might be saved but you will need to scrub everything with detergent.

3) Ensure the Utilities In Your Home are Okay

After the damage from Hurricane Sandy, your local utility providers will be making the rounds to make sure that your home is okay. Take note of these visits as it will come up in future conversations with your agent and potential buyers. You will want to make sure electrical outlets, switch boxes, breaker/fuse panels are all in working order. You will also want to make sure that your HVAC systems (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) are all working correctly.

4) Make Sure to Turn in Claims to Your Insurance Provider

When you put your home on the market, you want to be sure it looks as close to how you pictured it looking before Hurricane Sandy. If you have homeowner's insurance and your home sustained damages in the storm, it is worth speaking with an adjuster and filing a claim to recover some of the losses. Get started by making basic repairs immediately and compiling an inventory of any items that were lost or damaged. If you have questions about filing a claim or recovering losses you can check out these helpful tips from United Policyholders and Kiplinger.

5) Have an Honest Conversation with Your Agent

Most agents agree that damage from a storm like Hurricane Sandy should not significantly affect the value of your home. But there are a lot of variables to consider in the assessment like the clean-up efforts for the home or the measures taken to protect in the first place from Hurricane Sandy. You can hire a home inspector to preemptively look through your home to understand issues that might arise when potential buyers are going through it for a real evaluation. Make sure to have an honest conversation with your agent about the value, the comparable properties in the area that have sold recently, and any feedback from the home inspector.

6) Preparing For the Move

Moving is already a stressful and emotional process. If you add to it that you have just recently survived a massive hurricane like Sandy, you should remember to cut yourself some slack as you prepare for the move later on this year or in 2013. As you are getting ready for a move, you are donating and throwing out old clothes, which might have been something you were forced to do in the aftermath of Sandy. Make sure to hire a good mover, since you want to minimize the risk of filing yet another claim after the work you most likely will do after Sandy. You can also use storage as a place to hold your items after the large storm and before you move to your new home.