

Housing Programs & Services

NEWSLETTER

De-cluttering your Home

As you de-clutter, you'll face this question over and over (and over) again. Experts weigh in to help you decide.

Toss it if...

1. You have twice as many as you need. Take inventory of your duplicate items. If you own enough spatulas and coffee mugs to supply a small diner, it's time to shed a few.
2. It's a gift you don't love. "Sometimes when we give away a present, we feel like we're giving away the person," says Elsa Jewett, a feng shui consultant based in Denver. Remind yourself it's just an object.
3. It's not worth repairing. Search for similar items on eBay; if your item's current value is less than the cost of repairing it (hello, broken printer from 2004), then toss and replace. Otherwise, give yourself a deadline. If you don't get around to fixing the thing within six months, you can probably let it go.
4. Your gut says lose it. Don't second-guess your instincts. "A lot of people worry they'll have regrets," says life coach Gail Blanke, author of *Throw Out Fifty Things*. "They're afraid that one day they'll need that exact thing. But 99 percent of the time you just don't."
5. You don't know what it is. UPOs (unidentified plastic objects) get 30 days. If they're still a

mystery one month later, dump 'em.

Keep it if...

1. It's sentimental gold. "The more memorabilia you have, the less emotionally valuable each individual item becomes," says Emily Wilska, an organization consultant in San Francisco. Instead of saving every card your beloved uncle ever sent, pick the one that captures his spirit best.



2. It fits your life today. Your possessions should support who you are right now, not the person you were five years—or five pounds—ago. Your ten-year-old LBD that still looks great? It stays.

3. You think it's gorgeous (even if no one else does). Stuff that makes you smile—like the glittery clothespin reindeer your child made in third grade—doesn't count as "clutter."

4. You'd buy it again. It's tough to be objective about your own belongings. So ask yourself, What would I do if I saw this in a store?

5. You'll find a place for it. "Putting it back in a box is just predisposal," says Erin R. Do-land, author of *Unclutter Your Life in One Week!!* Any item worth keeping is worth creating a space for.

Contributed by MSN Lifestyle contributor Catherine DiBenedetto

Wish to donate your unused item, check these options out: <http://www.oprah.com/home/Donate-Your-Used-Goods-To-Charities>

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Notable News

Looking to purchase Green Products for your home, check out these websites.

<http://www.chlorinefreeproducts.org/>

<http://www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/eco-home.cfm?redirect=1>

<http://www.energystar.gov/purchasing>

<http://www.globalecolabelling.net/categ.html>

<http://www.greenguard.org/quickSearch.aspx>

<http://www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/location.cfm>

<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=147>

<http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/products/index.htm>

Calendar

- **April 22nd** Earth Day
- **May 31st** Memorial Day—City offices closed
- **July 5th** In observance of Independence Day – City offices closed

Programs

Rehabilitate Your Home

The City's Housing Rehabilitation Program is now accepting applications for eligible homeowners. This program assists homeowners with health and safety issues, correcting code violations and accumulated deferred home maintenance projects. Contact the Program Coordinator for information at (480) 474-2635 or visit www.ajcity.net/housing for an application.

Annual Paint-a-Thon

It's that time of year when we plan for our Annual Paint-a-Thon event. This event is held one Saturday in October and is intended to paint the exteriors of owner occupied homes for the elderly and/or disabled low income populations. (Manufactured homes are not eligible). If you are aware of a potential homeowner, please contact Heather at 480-474-2635 to obtain an application. Volunteers are needed! The City is seeking groups who wish to manage a project. Please contact Heather for more information.

Shop AJ

The Shop AJ initiative is a joint effort to encourage residents to shop in Apache Junction. Did You Know...

1. Business Week Magazine named Apache Junction #4 on their "America's Best Affordable Places to Retire" list!
2. Local sales tax revenue is the single largest source of funding for city services.
3. Unlike many other cities, Apache Junction has NO city property tax.
4. 42 cents of every dollar in the City's general fund budget is supported by shopping in AJ.
5. For every \$1 in the City's general fund budget, approximately 41 cents goes to Police and Public Safety, 18 cents for Parks & Recreation and 9 cents for Library services.

Additional information can be found on the City's website at <http://www.ajcity.net/index.aspx?NID=438>

Busy Bee Home Maintenance Tips

Are you an SRP customer? They have a variety of Rebates and Discounts at <http://www.savewithsrp.com/SaveWithSRP.aspx?slideid=KillAWatt>

Cooling Tips from SRP:

Did you know your doors and windows may allow air into your home even when they are closed. Adding weather stripping around these spaces can improve your comfort and reduce your utility bills. You can test the weather stripping on your exterior doors by shining a flashlight along the edge. If you can see light from the flashlight, it's time to replace your weather stripping. Outlets and light switches can be sources of air leakage. Foam outlet weather stripping and light switch gaskets reduce drafts.

Replace disposable air filters or clean permanent ones at least once a month. A dirty filter forces your equipment to work harder, causing higher energy bills.

Set your ceiling fans to blow downward during the summer to circulate air rather than lowering your thermostat.

Set your thermostat between 78 to 80 degrees when you are home and up to 85 degrees when you are away. For every degree you set your thermostat above 80 degrees, you can save approximately 2 to 3% on cooling costs.

Bees Wishes



RESOURCES

- For resources and agencies that can offer help statewide check out www.cir.org or by phone at 602-263-8856
- Statewide Foreclosure Hotline: 1-877-448-1211
- United Way and CAAFA offer a special resource guide for human services throughout Northern Pinal County. Check out their website at <http://www.npcresources.org/>
- Can't afford to spay or neuter your pets? Apache Junction Animal Control has a program to help. Call 480-983-4405.

HOUSING PROGRAM PURPOSE AND GOALS:

1. Eliminate health and safety hazards in homes;
2. Benefit low to moderate income residents; and
3. Improve neighborhoods and encourage stability.

Perhaps, duct tape can fix everything!



Housing Funnies

If you have a question or comment about anything written in this newsletter, please contact:
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