

Shedding Light on **LEDs**

Many modern household indoor and outdoor lighting solutions rely on fixtures that use LEDs (light-emitting diodes), for good reasons. First, they are significantly more energy efficient than traditional incandescent bulbs, which convert much of their supplied energy into heat loss. In contrast, LED lights dedicate considerably more of their supplied energy to produce light, which is why they stay cool to the touch. Furthermore, LED lights last much longer than other bulbs and wear out very slowly over time, rather than burning out abruptly.

Another advantage of LED lighting is the ability to design more creative styles, functionality and flexibility without the need for a large chamber to create and produce light. Although LED lights can be designed to resemble standard screw-in bulbs, some LED fixtures don't need traditional-style bulbs at all. For example, you can apply adhesive LED strip lighting without the need for any fixture or heavy wiring whatsoever, allowing for unique lighting effects in various locations.



Social Media **Security**

Over the years, social media networks have expanded exponentially, serving many communities in many ways. Unfortunately, such popularity can create vulnerability to exploitation, especially with many users not being careful enough to mitigate risks. Here is some advice to help prevent being compromised by hackers and other deceiving types:

1. For any platform that shares your identity, check your settings to ensure no unnecessary personal information, such as phone numbers and email and home addresses can be revealed. Always be cautious about postings or using search options that reveal medical, financial or other information about yourself or family members.
2. Do not download apps on a whim. It's important to understand exactly what you're getting – and what you may be giving up – by reading the terms of agreement, and also noting details whenever they are changed. Be leery of gimmicks like quizzes and other bait that extract profile-seeking information.
3. Confine confidential exchanges to specific off-platform conversations, and only with those you know and trust. Don't "befriend" those you don't know – they could, in fact, be robotic data miners.

Making Sense of **Real Estate**

Although COVID 19 caused initial uncertainty in real estate markets, prices in many areas rose month over month. This caused some observers to suggest that the home buyer's market would no longer follow traditional cycles. But, it's never wise to make oversimplified and broad predictions in real estate. There is always merit in careful analysis of local markets to help determine whether prices might change erratically or return to pre-pandemic patterns. For example, if working from home remains common, urban real estate with proximity to major corporate, government and/or educational institutions may be under less demand, potentially giving more relative value to communities further away.

Conversely, increased employment opportunities for on-site workers at specific locations such as hospitals and distribution hubs, can affect demand for home ownership and rental housing in certain areas. Meanwhile, interest rates and inflation are strong factors in triggering population mobility, with every basis point giving house-hunters less or more buying power. Government decisions regarding taxation and subsidization can also become a stimulating or stabilizing counterbalance. Even in regions with seasonal population cycles, such as winter tourism destinations or university towns, it's wise to have a thoughtful discussion about market variables before making any decision regarding your real estate future.

