

FRIDAY Home Guide

The HOME GUIDE
on TV - see page F18

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1996

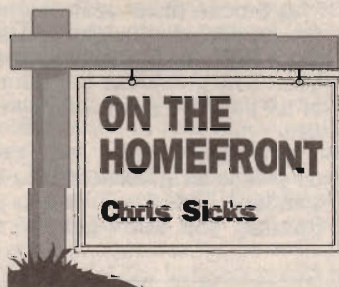
The Washington Times

SECTION F

Forecast is for 'very strong' market in early '97

The Washington-area real estate market will rebound in early 1997 as a result of improving consumer confidence, says a survey that has proven accurate in the past.

"My figures tell me that sales will be up 35 percent this January," says Casey Samson, whose Samson 100 Index surveys top real estate agents each month to determine consumer confidence



in the Washington area.

"This year will see a strong finish, and 1997 will be very strong right from the start," Mr. Samson predicts.

The basis for such optimism is a recent increase in his consumer-confidence index, which stood at 41 in October. That's up a bit from September and up significantly from the 28 of October 1995.

Mr. Samson uses these figures

to predict upcoming sales, because more confidence among consumers today has been shown to indicate they will buy a home within a few months.

Mr. Samson's forecasts have proven to be quite accurate.

He predicted 36,000 home sales in the first three quarters of 1996. Actual sales were 36,292. (Mr. Samson's column on Page F19 discusses the performance of

his 100 Index so far this year.)

Sales this year were generally better than in 1995, but last year was the worst for real estate sales since 1991. This year was a bit busier, yet at the end of October, the year's sales had only outdistanced 1995 by 5 percent.

But things may be about to change.

see SALES, page F2

VIRGINIA



Home sellers face new law on lead paint

By David Rathgeber
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

People planning to sell a house built before 1978 have one more regulation to face.

Effective Dec. 6, new federal regulations require disclosure to home buyers of the presence of lead-based paint and the danger it poses.

Lead is that familiar metal often used in fishing weights. When it gets into your body,