



OPEN ENROLLMENT IS ON NOW!

Stuff happens. Life changes.

NOW is the time to update your health plan.



800.939.8088, option 2
realcareCAR.com/OE



Mortgage rates plunge by largest amount in a year

Source: CNN

Mortgage rates fell this week in the biggest one-week drop since last November. It's the second straight week that rates have fallen after rising for seven weeks. The 30-year fixed rate mortgage fell to an average of 7.50 percent in the week ending Nov. 9, down 26 basis points from 7.76 percent the week before, according to data that

Freddie Mac released Thursday.

As mortgage rates dipped last week, there was a 2.5 percent increase in all applications for loans from a week ago, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. Applications for mortgages to purchase home went up by 3 percent.

READ MORE

PHOTO TIME

Did you know that you have an official CA REALTOR® Virtual Photo Op? [Skip the line.](#)

Real estate agent fees cause debate

Source: NPR

This podcast explains the recent lawsuit against some real estate brokerages in Missouri and the National Association of REALTORS®, over how agents are compensated. Typically, a seller pays the buyer's agent as well as the seller's agent out of the proceeds of the sale, and any listing with the multiple listing services (MLSs) often include an offer of compensation to share a commission on a resulting sale. One suggestion from the Consumer Federation of America is to decouple the commission so that sellers and buyers are responsible for paying their own agents.

However, the difficulty with that approach, according to former President of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) Ron

Phipps, is that a lot of buyers don't have additional cash to pay an agent, especially first-time homebuyers. People have the option not to use an agent, but if the buyer doesn't have representation during this tremendously costly and often complicated transaction, their risk is significant.

[READ MORE](#)

A third of homebuyers paying all cash as mortgage rates remain high

Source: Redfin

An increasing share of home buyers are paying all cash as mortgage rates remain elevated. Real-estate brokerage Redfin found that in September, 34.1 percent of home buyers, or one in three, were paying all cash. This is the highest percentage of all-cash buyers since 2014.

One concern about the rising number of all-cash buyers is that it will deepen housing inequality. The majority of individual home buyers — especially first-time homebuyers — do not have access to enough cash to make an offer on a home without obtaining a mortgage.

According to an April report from the National Association of REALTORS®, more than half of people age 58 to 76 pay in all cash. The other group likely to pay in all cash was single women. The report indicated that single women coming from a past marriage, whether widowed or divorced, may be moving from a larger, family home to a smaller property.

READ MORE

Climate change is impacting the home insurance industry and damaging the U.S. housing market

Source: Orange County Register

Climate change-induced extreme weather events are impacting the affordability and availability of home and fire insurance across the United States. As insurers increasingly raise premiums or pull out from areas impacted by floods and fires, buyers are struggling to secure affordable insurance. For instance, State Farm, the largest home insurer in California, paused issuing policies in the state due to wildfire risks, and Allstate stopped issuing policies, as well. In regions affected by extreme weather, affordable insurance is becoming scarce, and buyers are sometimes walking away from deals due either to the unavailability of insurance or fears of future rising costs that may challenge their ability to stay in the home. Some sellers have given two years' worth of insurance costs to the buyer, or they have needed to significantly reduce the sales price of the home to account for the cost of insurance.

To put the rising risks in perspective, NOAA says that as of Oct. 10, there had been 24 weather and climate disasters with losses exceeding \$1 billion in the U.S. this year, whereas for the prior 40 years, the average number had been 18 events. In a recent survey of CAR members, 61% of those who had had a deal fall through said that

it had been because insurance was not available to a client and an additional 19% said that the premiums had been too expensive. Creative solutions are needed.

[READ MORE](#)

First-time homebuyers in California may be eligible for \$10K grants to cover closing costs

Source: Pleasanton Weekly

The CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® has announced that its Housing Affordability Fund program will provide another \$500,000 in closing-cost assistance for eligible first-time California homebuyers from underserved communities. The additional funding brings the total amount of grant money for the program to \$2 million.

Since 2022, the program has provided closing-cost grants totaling \$1.5 million for 156 first-time homebuyer families from underserved communities throughout California. Closing costs, which are often about 11 percent of the total sales price of a home in California, usually include items such as a real estate commission, loan fee, escrow charge, title insurance premium and a pest inspection.

[READ MORE](#)

**WONDERING HOW TO USE FLOOR
TIME TO YOUR BEST ADVANTAGE?**

WE CAN HELP! [ACCESS SMART TIPS HERE](#)

