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Enjoy the gorgeous views of the Cascade Mountains from the large outdoor deck with fireplace, BBQ and refrigerator. 3007 sq. ft., 3 bed, 2.5 bath home with extensive beam work, 12 x 12 timbers in the entry, natural stone fireplace, vaulted ceilings and coffered ceilings, hardwood floors throughout, slab granite kitchen countertops, stainless steel appliances, knotty alder cabinets, tile showers, automatic indoor blinds and outdoor power shades. \$1,350,000

granite kitchen countertops, stainless steel appliances, knotty alder cabinets, tile showers, automatic indoor blinds and outdoor power shades. \$1,350,000

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New Tech for the Home

The pandemic has given rise to or accelerated several trends in home design that will outlast this year of troubled living. Here are a few that can be game-changers for smart homes.

BOOST YOUR WI-FI

When the pandemic shift many to work from home, the power and reach of Wi-Fi became a crucial link to the outside world for personal and professional reasons. In neighborhoods where dozens of signals placed stress on the wireless networks, having a powerful router made a big difference in allowing for multiple streaming devices for work and leisure.

In a world of Zoom calls and downloads that continues and will likely exist in a post-pandemic world, speed and signal strength has become a big player in home

networking. Wi-Fi 6 has arrived at just the right time to solve most problems, and along with it, routers capable of directing connections.

Wi-Fi 6 is designed to bring faster speeds and broader coverage, directing internet traffic through multiple "lanes." New-generation Wi-Fi 6 routers are pricier and at first you may not notice how efficient they can be. The trick is these routers, such as Amazon's Eero Pro 6 and Netgear's Orbi make improvements based on your usage over time. Video calls become sharper and faster, smart home accessories respond faster and so on.

Once you experience Wi-Fi 6, even if you don't note dramatic increases in speed initially, there's no turning back. Wi-Fi 6 will become the standard and the investment will put you on the cutting edge of this new technology.

GET SMART OUTSIDE

There's almost no common household appliance, entertainment center or outdoor environment that can't be improved with the ever-increasing world of smart devices. If they seem intimidating, they're not. After a short learning curve, chances are you'll additively add more and more. And with faster internet speeds and broader reach using Wi-Fi 6, capabilities are even more expansive.

Many homeowners use a variety of smart gadgets, from speakers

to plugs and thermostats, all controlled effortlessly from an app on your phone or tablet. But with spring and summer arriving, what about smart outdoor living?

Among the more intriguing devices is the smart barbecue grill, such as the Trager Ironwood 650. This smart grill uses pellets for cooking and it's D2 Drive uses a variable speed fan (0-100 rpm) and embedded software to deliver better control over cooking temperatures and provide faster ignition times, according to PC Mag.

Smart plugs like the D-Link mydlink Outdoor Wi-Fi Smart Plug make it a breeze to control lighting, pool pumps and other outdoor necessities. It's weatherproof and quickly installs to support Alexa and Google Assistant for use with voice commands.

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