

Local sales of existing homes rise

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Home sales in the Greenville metro area are tracking national numbers showing activity and purchases are up.

The Greater Greenville area, which includes Pickens and Laurens counties, saw an increase of 12.8 percent in year-to-date home sales in March and a 10.1 percent rise year-over-year, according to local Multiple Listing Statistics.

Walter Molony, a spokesman for the NAR, said while the association doesn't report on metropolitan sales, "we do a monthly survey of our members where we get a lot of voluntary comments about the traffic being up and buyers being more serious."

"When you look at the U.S. (sales) compared to a year ago, all the regions are up," Molony said. "With very few exceptions, it's a very forward looking market."

Greater Greenville home sales have been on the rise since January. Sales have been consistently higher than the previous year since October 2011.

As of March 10, the average sales price for homes was up 0.2 percent, from \$251,230 in April 2011 to \$251,628 in April 2012. The medium sales price had risen six percent to \$171,900 in April from \$170,838 the same month last year.

The number of housing units on the market for sale has dropped 17.6 percent, from 6,810 in April 2011 to 5,610 currently, MLS figures show.

David Crigler, executive vice president and chief of operations at Prudential C. Dan Joyner Co., Realtors, believes there's a perception among people here that "we've hit bottom and started coming back up here in this area, which is good."

At Prudential, sales are up 19.5 percent for the first three months of this year compared to the same period last year, Crigler said. The firm's call center has been consistently over 750 appointments per week, "which is well over what it has been," he said.

"I'm going to remain optimistic," Crigler said. "I'm watching the activity. It still seems pretty positive."