

How Your Realtor® Keeps You And Your Home Safer

Sellers, one of the best reasons to hire a Realtor® to represent your home in the marketplace is for security reasons. Realtors are trained to help protect your safety while promoting your home to buyers in a wide variety of mediums from the Internet to the sign in your yard.

Because they work closely with the public in unique ways, Realtors® are considered by law enforcement officials to be in a high risk profession. Realtors® are mobile, work in a variety of locations, and are often in the company of consumers whom they may not know well. To protect their own personal safety, as well as your property, Realtors® have evolved a number of safety guidelines that might be helpful for you as a consumer to know.

Qualifying buyers

One advantage of working with a Realtor® is that buyers won't come to your home without being accompanied by a professional. Realtors® make themselves the point of contact so that you don't have to open your door to just anyone who comes along. They also share information about your home in a broker cooperative called the multiple listing service (MLS), so that other brokers may bring their buyers.

The buyers that your Realtor® and others bring are also likely to be better qualified to purchase your home. Realtors® work with buyers to make sure they are capable of making a sound offer on your home, but they also do some qualifying for their own personal safety. As they accompany buyers to your home, they know they can be victimized as well as you if they aren't careful and know who they are dealing with.

Promoting your home with virtual tours and multiple photos

Realtors® promote your home on Internet sites such as Realtor.com, where homes are showcased with virtual tours and multiple photos. According to Realtor.com, homes with virtual tours are viewed 40 percent more often by consumers than those without. Internet consumers have been proven to choose a home, buy more expensive homes and close more quickly than offline buyers, according to the California Association of Realtors.

Your Realtor® may suggest a virtual tour or multiple photos, but for your personal safety and the protection of your valuables, she or he may insist that precious items, such as collectibles or rare paintings, not be displayed. In fact, your Realtor® may suggest that you store valuables while your home is being marketed.

Open houses

Most Realtors® who offer open houses do so with increased security. Either they will ask another Realtor® or a lender to accompany them, or they will notify their offices and other persons of their whereabouts. Realtors® request visitors to sign in and many are starting to request drivers' licenses of buyers before allowing them to view the home.

Because open houses are so public, rarely do buyers attend with the intention of pilfering anything, but you can foil people who want small items such as high-cost prescription medicines by cleaning out your medicine cabinets for the duration of the open house. Also, clear off any bric-a-brac and collectibles, and keep jewelry under lock and key.

Your personal safety

Don't ever open your door to anyone who says he or she is interested in seeing your home. If the buyer is genuine, he or she will be accompanied by a Realtor®, but keep in mind, that no Realtor® would stop and knock on your door without going through a proper procedure to consult the MLS for showing instructions. So if you get a knock on the door, direct the buyer to contact your agent, and let the agent qualify the buyer and determine if the buyer is represented by a Realtor® or not.

From the National Association of Realtors