

# **Real Estate Safety Tips For Home Sellers**

*By J. Lennox Scott*

When selling your home, it's important to take some precautionary measures to ensure that you and your home are protected at all times. When your house is for sale it could be shown at almost any given time—often when you're not there. While the vast majority of buyers are of no concern, it is still in your best interest to follow some basic safety guidelines.

As a home seller, the first thing you should do is remove all valuables and put them in a safe place. Items, such as jewelry, silverware, firearms, and valuable collections are common targets for thieves. In addition to this, you should make sure that all prescription drugs are well-hidden. There are known instances of people posing as buyers in order to search homes for prescription drugs and other valuables, therefore it's wise to put them in a secure place.

Working with a Realtor is a safety measure of its own. Realtors are considered law enforcement for the real estate industry in many ways because they represent their buyers at all times, in all circumstances. When a buyer tours your home, their Realtor is always with them—and often times your Realtor will be present as well. Realtors make themselves the point of contact so that all buyer inquiries are handled for you. They also share information about your home with other Realtors so that all communication about your home is managed on your behalf.

Unfortunately because of the role they play, Realtors sometimes put themselves in situations where they need to be cautious of their own safety. As a result, there are certain security measures that Realtors have begun taking. For example, some agents are choosing to meet prospective clients at their office instead of at the home. Real estate companies are also beginning to photocopy prospective client's identification information, such as a driver's license, before they can be shown a home. Some agents are also having a second agent join them at open houses. All of these measures are intended to protect the safety of real estate agents and their clients.

Home sellers who choose not work with a Realtor can put themselves at risk too because they are often alone during home showings and open houses. If you are selling your own home, communicate with your neighbors—let them know when you're expecting a buyer so they can watch for possible problem signs. It's also important for you to keep a log of everyone who has looked at your home. In addition to their name and phone number, you should also write down a description of their car, license plate number, and any other information that would be helpful in the event of any trouble.

For your own personal safety you should never open your door to anyone who says that they are interested in seeing your home. If the buyer is genuine, he or she will be accompanied by a Realtor, and furthermore, an appointment would have been scheduled through your agent. Also keep in mind that no Realtor would ever stop by your home

without following the proper channels, so if you're ever faced with this situation, simply direct them to contact your agent.

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