

A Few Safety Hints ...

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® has come up with a few safety hints ...

ASK PROSPECT TO STOP BY YOUR OFFICE and complete the personal identification form before going to a property. This should be openly obtained, preferably in the presence of an associate. Information should be retained at the office; knowing that a name and address are known may discourage an assailant.

INTRODUCE THE PROSPECT TO SOMEONE IN YOUR OFFICE ... A would-be assailant does not like to be noticed or receive exposure knowing a person could pick him out of a lineup.

USE AN EMERGENCY CODE WORD ... If you sense you are in a dangerous situation, call an associate or the office with a pre-assigned emergency code word (i.e., “*We are on MAYDAY Street*” or “*Look in the RED FILE.*”) Whoever receives the emergency code word should send help immediately and remove the agent from the situation.

USE YOUR OWN CAR to show a property. The prospect could have a weapon concealed or even another person hidden within their car.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDS that you DO NOT TRY to talk your way out of a situation.

IF YOU ARE ATTACKED, scream. It has been found that by screaming “FIRE,” people sometimes respond more quickly than a plea for “HELP.”

CALL THE POLICE:

- Any time you are suspicious about a prospect.
- You feel uncomfortable about showing a house to a prospect.
- You feel suspicious about a person after you have shown a house.
- You have been assaulted in any way, i.e., robbed, raped, mugged.

SAFEGUARD YOUR OFFICE. Keep your windows and counters clear. Robbers and attackers like to work in private and police like to see in. Keep a radio or TV playing fairly loudly in the back room when you’re alone in the office. Secure all unused doors and windows, especially if they are in the rear of the office and out of sight and sound.

OPEN HOUSE PRECAUTIONS.

1. Upon entering a house for the first time, check all rooms and determine several “escape” routes.
2. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
3. Make sure if you were to escape by a back door, that you could escape from the back yard. Frequently, high fences surround yards that contain swimming pools or hot tubs.
4. Place one of your business cards — with the date and time on the back — in a kitchen cupboard. Note on it if you were the first to arrive or if clients were waiting.
5. When prospects begin to arrive, jot down their car description, license number and physical description.
6. When showing the house, always walk behind the prospect. Direct them, don’t lead them. Say, for example, “the kitchen is on your left,” and gesture for them to go ahead of you.
7. Watch what the prospects are doing at all times. Do not become preoccupied with viewing the home.
8. Notify someone in your office, your answering service, a friend or relative that you will be calling in every hour on the hour. And if you don’t call, they are to notify the police immediately.
9. Inform a neighbor that you will be showing the house and ask if he would keep an ear open for anything out of the ordinary.
10. Have someone from your office, a relative or friend stay with you.

