

Showing/Open House Safety Tips for Sellers

As part of the Realtor Safety Program, the Elmira-Corning Board of Realtors has prepared this checklist for our members to use in helping keep the public safe during a real estate transaction:

Safety tips for sellers from Realtor Magazine and safety specialist, Tracey Hawkins:

1. Prescription drugs: Remove or lock them up prior to showings and open houses.
2. Stow away valuables. Valuables include everything from mail left on the countertops (which may contain personal information and bank statements) to such items as jewelry, artwork, cellphones and gaming systems.
3. Remove family photos. (You don't know who is walking through the house. You may have photos of your wife, your teenage daughter, your children displayed and you could have a pedophile or stalker walking through your house.)
4. Make a house safe for the buyers and the agent. Turn on lights, make sure there are no potential hazards like loose floorboards or carpets, remove (or secure) guns and weapons from the premises, and remove the blocks of knives on the kitchen countertops.
5. Keep the house locked and consider extra monitoring, such as video surveillance.* Doors need to be kept locked at all times. A home is being presented to the public and it may attract intruders. * In New York, video is allowed for the purposes of security. Audio recording without being a party to the conversation or express consent is prohibited by law and punishable as a felony. If you ask your agent to record the audio for you, that agent will have to disclose this to the other agent or member of the public.
6. Beware of unexpected visitors coming to your house. You should not show "buyers" through your home. Most real buyers understand that a for sale sign on a property means that they need to call a real estate professional.

Typically, a seller's agent is not present at home showings. Even a buyer's agent cannot always follow buyers all around the house. For an agent holding an open house, this is especially true. An agent is not a security guard and cannot protect your valuables. Before you leave for a showing you should walk through the house and make sure that everything of value is out of sight.

Open house specifics:

While we have a "registration" form, Buyers often sign illegibly (or not at all.) You can direct the agent to require accurate information and/or identification (such as a driver's license or other photo ID) before allowing buyers to proceed through your home. Please initial here if you wish your agent to do this: _____ Note: Some agents may do this in all cases for their personal safety as well as the protection of your home and belongings.

Seller(s) has read and agreed to follow the safety tips outlined above.

Attached to listing agreement for property located at: _____
