

Safety at Open Houses

An open house can be a great sales tool, but it also exposes you to numerous unfamiliar people for the first time. Stay safe by practicing these guidelines.

- Upon entering a house for the first time, check all rooms and determine several “escape” routes. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
- Once inside, turn on the lights and open the curtains. These are not only sound safety procedures, but also great marketing tactics.
- Make sure that if you were to escape by the back door, you could escape from the backyard. Frequently, high fences surround yards that contain swimming pools or hot tubs.
- When prospects begin to arrive, jot down their car descriptions, license numbers and physical descriptions.
- 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.
- Notify someone in your office, your answering service, a friend or a 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.
- Inform a neighbor that you will be showing the house and ask if he or she would keep an eye and ear open for anything out of the ordinary.

(Source: Washington Real Estate Safety Council)

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One week, for life.