

## Safety First

### Safety Tips to Share with Sellers

The National and Roanoke Valley Associations of REALTORS® work hard to keep REALTOR® Safety foremost in everyone's minds. But what about your clients? They, too, face some dangers in allowing strangers into their homes or visiting other people's properties. Share this valuable advice with everyone, and you'll help them learn to protect themselves against crime.

- ◇ Remind your Sellers that strangers will be walking through their home during showings or open houses. Tell them to hide any valuables in a safe place. For security's sake, remember to remove keys, credit cards, jewelry, crystal, furs and other valuables from the home or lock them away during showings. Also remove prescription drugs. Some seemingly honest people wouldn't mind getting their hands on a bottle of uppers or downers.
- ◇ Sellers should not leave personal information like mail or bills out in the open where anyone can see it. They should shut off computers and lock up laptops and any other expensive electronics, before your showings.
- ◇ Warn your Sellers that unexpected visitors may ask to see their home. Alert them that not all agents, buyers and sellers are who they say they are. Predators come in all shapes and sizes. Instruct your Sellers not to show their home by themselves, and to refer all inquiries to you.
- ◇ Instruct your Sellers that they are responsible for their pets. If possible, animals should be removed during showings. Make Sellers aware that buyers and agents are sometimes attacked, and the owner will be held liable.
- ◇ Encourage your Sellers to make their home safe for buyers and agents. Turn on lights prior to showing. Remove all weapons before showings. And make sure there are no potential hazards, like loose floorboards or carpets, that might cause someone to trip or fall.
- ◇ Finally, when you leave a Seller's property, whether after an open house or a standard showing, make sure that all doors and windows are locked. Thieves commonly use open houses to scout for valuables and possible points of entry, then return after the agent leaves.
- ◇ Let your Sellers know that you will take all of the above safety precautions, but that when they return home, they should immediately verify that all doors and windows are locked and all valuables accounted for.