

Alexandria
Old Town
703-739-0100

Arlington
703-237-1100

Burke
703-913-8080

Fair Oaks
703-279-1500

Fredericksburg
540-373-1300

Front Royal
540-878-4210

Gainesville
703-468-2020

Kingstowne
703-417-5000

Lake Ridge
703-492-7900

Loudoun
703-840-2000

Manassas
703-393-0333

McLean
703-734-8900

Reston
703-318-9333

Stafford
540-658-0992

Vienna
703-242-2860

Warrenton
540-349-7990



Staying Safe: A Real Estate Agent's First Priority

As September comes to a close, the lessons and tips learned during National Realtor Safety Month should not be forgotten. As a real estate agent you should take the information and work it in to your daily routine.

The Bureau of Labor and Statistics reports that during the period of 2011-2014, an average of 77 deaths per year occurred within the real estate, rental, and lease industry. That was up from an annual average of 75 deaths from 2003-2010. Working conditions make real estate agents appealing targets for crime – meetings in empty homes, buildings, and remote locations, and sometimes at odd hours with no one else around.

Personal Information

As a real estate agent you want to do all you can to make yourself accessible to potential buyers and sellers, but it should be done with caution. Have you given careful consideration to what information you put – or do not put – on your business card?

- Never use your home address.
- Never use your home telephone number.
- Never use your middle initial.
- Always use a photograph of you wearing professional attire, if you use a picture on your card.

BY PLANNING AHEAD
AND IMPLEMENTING A
SAFETY PLAN INTO YOUR
DAILY ROUTINE YOU CAN
REDUCE THE RISK

It is highly advisable to meet with a client in your office before agreeing to a private showing so you can gauge the

person while there are others around. It is best to arrange to meet the client at a property. Avoid driving a client in your vehicle to eliminate the possibility of being carjacked.

Safety of the Seller

Real estate agents have an obligation to help protect the safety of the seller. In addition to thoroughly checking a property after an open house to ensure no one has remained behind, perhaps hiding in wait, you should also offer some suggestions to help protect clients through the selling process:

- Never show their property themselves. All inquiries should go through you since you are more familiar with legitimate agents. This will help prevent a criminal from posing as an agent to gain access to the house.
- Before a showing the seller should stash all bills and mail that contain identifying information, put away laptops and lockdown computers, and hide small electronics and items that could easily be stolen.

Becoming the victim of a crime is not a pleasant topic to consider, but by planning ahead and implementing a safety plan into your daily routine you can reduce the risk. Unfortunately real estate agents are vulnerable due to the nature of their work. Please take the time and precautions necessary to protect yourself. Awareness is important, planning ahead is essential, and following your gut could be life-saving.

Stay safe... and we'll see you at the settlement table.

Anytime you are showing a property you should follow this checklist:

- Make sure someone in your office is aware of your exact schedule – times, locations, and clients you will be working with.