Open House Safety Tips

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.

- Call the local police department and ask them to have a squad care drive by during your open-house hours.
- Check your cell phone's strength and signal prior to the open house. Have emergency numbers programmed on speed dial. Carry an extra, fully charged cell phone battery.
- Determine several "escape" routes that you can use in case of an emergency. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
- 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 prospective buyers 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 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: National Association of REALTORS® Safety Week kit

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