



CITY OF CLEARWATER

POST OFFICE BOX 4748, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33758-4748
CLEARWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT, 645 PIERCE STREET, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33756
TELEPHONE (727) 562-4242

POLICE DEPARTMENT

SAFETY WHEN SELLING YOUR HOME

Clearwater, Fla. - When you are selling your house, dozens - even hundreds - of strangers will traipse through your home. Among the host of potential buyers may be a few potential thieves. Besides, do you want even honest potential buyers looking at your private papers and knowing all about your personal business? Follow these tips to keep your valuables safe and your private matters secure.

1. A good real estate agent will pre-screen buyers before they enter your home as well as keep an eye on them once they're inside. But what should you do about the neighborhood visitor who heard that your house is for sale? Get full information **BEFORE** you let anyone into your home. If potential buyers phone, tell them that you're collecting information for your agent. Get their name, address, and phone number. Ask if they've already talked to a lender or are already pre-qualified or pre-approved for a home loan. Assure them that the information will be safe with you, but keep it until after the home has been sold.
2. Show your home only by appointment. Yes, there is a sign in the yard - but that doesn't mean you should open the door to anyone who drops by, especially at night. Take a phone number and set up a later appointment.
3. After your house is listed for sale, **NEVER** leave a message on your voicemail or answering machine telling callers that you're not at home. Why advertise that the house is empty?
4. Ask every potential buyer who visits your house to sign a roster. Your agent will handle this for a formal open house, but be sure to use the same procedure for casual visitors. Don't be embarrassed to announce that it's a security measure, if anyone protests.
5. Always check the doors and windows right after an open house or showing. You don't want any possible entrance left ajar for someone to enter later.
6. Don't discuss your personal routine or your schedule with buyers. Mentioning what a short trip you have to work may involve letting strangers - potential criminals - know when the house is usually empty.
7. Remove credit cards, jewelry, keys, silver, and other valuables from the house when it is being shown. If you choose to leave items on the premises, consider hiring a security guard.



"EQUAL EMPLOYMENT AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER"



CITY OF CLEARWATER

POST OFFICE BOX 4748, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33758-4748
CLEARWATER POLICE DEPARTMENT, 645 PIERCE STREET, CLEARWATER, FLORIDA 33756
TELEPHONE (727) 562-4242

POLICE DEPARTMENT

8. Don't leave prescription drugs in the house during a showing or an open house. A surprisingly large number of apparently honest people would be happy to get their hands on a bottle of pills. For the same reason be sure weapons of any sort are safely off the premises.
9. Don't discuss household security systems, including alarms, locks, deadbolts, etc., with prospective buyers. Don't put security information on your flyer or any other marketing materials.
10. Don't leave private documents in the house. Buyers are entitled to open doors and drawers to any built-in closets or cabinets, and they may open furniture as well.

