**Real Estate Facts Column**

**Realtor® Safety Tips for Home Buyers and Sellers**
**September 2018
*(453 Words)***

This month, the National Association of Realtors® released the *2018 Member Safety Report,* which surveyed over 3,000 Realtor® members about how safe they feel while on the job, their personal safety experiences and the safety procedures they follow.

The report found that nearly a third of Realtors® experienced a situation that made them fear for their personal safety or safety of their personal information and 43 percent of Realtors® choose to carry self-defense weapons.

“Realtors® understand better than anyone the safety risks associated with real estate transactions, so it is imperative to share safety protocols with home buyers so they can learn about what they may encounter during the home buying process,” said **[Full name of your local spokesperson, title]**.

The most common circumstances that resulted in fearful situations were open houses, showing vacant and model homes, working with properties that were unlocked or unsecured and showing homes in remote areas. Here are some safety protocols and guidelines from **[Full name of your board/association]** you should expect and keep in mind when working with a Realtor®, which ensure a safe experience for all parties involved.

**Meet at your agent’s office.** Instead of meeting for the first time at a property, a Realtor® may set-up the initial meeting at their office. “Most people would tell you that meeting at a real estate professional’s office is much more comfortable and appropriate for the first meeting and makes both parties feel safe,” said **[Last name of your local spokesperson]**.

**Secure your personal information.** Your agent may make copies of your driver’s license and mortgage preapproval letter for their records. This allows the agent to keep a record of your information at their office to be stored in a secure place. So be sure to have these items on hand for your initial meeting. “According to the report, nearly 70 percent of real estate offices have standard procedures for safeguarding client data and information. Keeping this information safe and secure is an important step that ensures a safe agent and client relationship,” said **[Last name of your local spokesperson].**

**Don’t view vacant properties at night.** Your agent may only show vacant properties by day, so you can see what safety hazards exist, such as loose floorboards or any other defects. So when viewing a vacant property, expect to view it during daylight hours.

For more information on Realtor® and consumer safety, visit [www.realtor.org/safety](http://www.realtor.org/safety).

If you are interested in selling or buying a home, contact **[Insert full name of your local association/board]** or visit [**Insert association website, if applicable]** to speak with a Realtor®, a member of the National Association of Realtors®.