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Prudential

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Be Mindful of your Safety and Property During the Homeselling Process

If you're selling your home, you have enough to think about without worrying that your home isn't safe, or that your things may be stolen. Yet, because of open houses or scheduled showings, strangers are coming and going all the time. A few safeguards can ensure your protection throughout the homeselling process.

The easiest solution is to remove valuable jewelry, fine art or collectables beforehand, and store them with a friend or family member. If that's not an option, find a place to hide valuables in the home or keep them with you in a suitcase when you leave. Don't forget to secure your personal papers and file cabinets, and remove your prescription bottles from your medicine cabinets.

Keep your doors and windows locked and when returning after a showing, double-check that they are secure. Prospective buyers will often open windows or doors. It may seem far-fetched, but it is possible that people unlock doors, then return later to steal things. People may come to the house multiple times and bring another person with them, who targets rooms while the agent is distracted.

"While one person has your attention, the other raids jewelry boxes and medicine cabinets for narcotics," said Robert Siciliano, an ADT.com security consultant who offers real estate advice on his blog. "In high crime areas, consider hiring an off-duty police officer to watch the property during a showing. You can't possibly watch everyone during an open house." It may seem impractical to install an alarm system since you will be moving. However, it will not only deter burglars but may also be a strong selling point.

If you're selling a home that's vacant, consider installing motion sensors to automatically turn on lights. Put a few lamps on a timer so it appears someone is home when you're out.

Reach out to your neighbors and ask them to keep an eye on your place. It's a good idea to introduce neighbors to your REALTOR® so they know things are OK when the agent is on the premises. By taking a few extra precautions, you can feel safe and secure during a home sale.