

BECAUSE SEPTEMBER IS REALTOR SAFETY MONTH, THIS ISSUE FEATURES ARTICLES TO HELP YOU STAY SAFE.



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“ALTHOUGH YOU CAN’T CONTROL WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU, YOU CAN CONTROL YOUR RESPONSE, AND THAT IS A GREAT PLACE TO START.”

Murphy’s Law and REALTOR® Safety

Real estate has one of the highest rates of homicide of any professional occupation, and the best safety devices do not always work. Reduce your risk of becoming a victim by having a default preprogrammed response ready to implement at the first sign of danger.

Everyone knows Murphy’s Law: “Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.” How many times have you been under a deadline to finish a proposal and your computer crashes? How about that important appointment you have to make and you are stuck in traffic with no hope of getting there on time? How many times have you tackled a home repair project and discovered that your tool is not quite right for the job, resulting in another trip to the hardware store? Let’s face it, Murphy only visits when you are most vulnerable. It’s a recurring fact of life.

In the realm of personal safety, Murphy’s Law brings dire consequences if you are unprepared to accept it as a factor. Law enforcement and military personnel are intimately familiar with Murphy, and train to great lengths to improvise, adapt, and overcome any contingency that may occur during the performance of their duties. As a real estate professional, you too must acknowledge

Murphy’s Law when it comes to your safety plan. Accept the fact that your personal device, safety app, cell phone, stun gun, or pepper spray probably will not work when you need it most.

Technology—especially in the form of the smartphone—is a wonderful tool that enhances our lives, but it is also a complex system with countless components that must work in harmony to achieve optimal results. A failure of one system (battery power, software, hardware, cellular network, Wi-Fi, etc.) renders the device useless. Even on a good day, the temporary loss of cell service or a software glitch seems devastating. Imagine the feeling you would have if your location-based safety app failed while you were showing a property and

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you were attacked. What if you accidentally dropped your phone or discovered that it was buried deep in your purse? What if you were in a rural area or inside a high-rise apartment building with poor cell reception? If you carry pepper spray or a stun gun, is it immediately accessible? When was the last time that you checked the batteries or tested the pressure of your pepper spray?

Here is the simple truth: technology is great when it works, but it cannot be your go-to plan in an emergency or under stress because that is exactly when Murphy's Law will appear. You must have a default preprogrammed response ready to implement at the first sign of danger. Decide now that you are going to leave the area (that is, get off the **X**) and then call for help. The last thing you should be doing under stress is focusing your attention on your device's screen. Instead, you should focus

your attention on putting as much distance between you and the threat as possible. That is why it is critical that you always have a primary and secondary exit identified, as well as an escape plan, before you enter a property or any other unfamiliar location.

If you ever find yourself in a situation where you need to defend yourself, don't expect your primary plan, whether it is a weapon or a self-defense technique, to be immediately effective. Decide now to have a warrior's mindset and attack your attacker with ferocious determination and have the flexibility to transition to another weapon, strike, or technique to disable the assailant so you can escape to a safe area and call for help.

The key to personal safety and self-defense is having the mindset of situational awareness at all times. Develop a series of preprogrammed responses to

dangerous scenarios and mentally rehearse them over and over so that they become instinct and can be implemented immediately under stress. Acknowledge Murphy's Law and accept the fact that it will visit at the moment you least expect it, but don't let it paralyze you. Although you can't control what is happening to you, you can control your response, and that is a great place to start. Stay safe!

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