

How Homebuyers and Sellers Can Protect Themselves Against Scams

Beaver County Association of Realtors® September 2026 – Homebuying and selling can be exciting and overwhelming, but it's important to stay alert for real estate scams throughout the process. Even when working with a trusted Realtor®, cybercriminals can find their way into a transaction and target personal information.

“One of the biggest scams that targets homebuyers and sellers is wire fraud,” shares BCAR President Brett Green. “This is a scam where criminals trick a buyer or seller into sending money – often a down payment or closing fees – to the scammer’s bank account. The scammer targets them by impersonating a real estate agent, lender, title company or other professional through email or text, providing fake or altered wire instructions and often creating a sense of urgency.”

Homebuyers and sellers can avoid wire fraud scams by taking careful steps to verify all wire instructions independently. They should never send money based solely on an email or text; instead, they should call their Realtor®, title company, attorney or other professional using a known, trusted phone number to confirm instructions before sending money.

Buyers should be on the lookout for red flags throughout the transaction, including sudden last-minute payment changes, a sense of urgency, deals that seem too good to be true, changes in previously established instructions, unfamiliar email addresses, spelling and format errors, unexpected attachments and requests for sensitive information.

Other real estate scams that target consumers include fake listings, seller impersonation, fake buyers and phishing – all of which have similar red flags and can result in the loss of money, personal information or even property.

“When it comes to any potential scam, the best tip I can offer is to play it safe and verify,” Green advised. “If there’s a red flag or something feels off, stop and verify. Don’t click the link, open the attachment or send the money. Instead, independently confirm the request with the appropriate professional by calling the number you know and trust.”

Read more about preventing real estate wire fraud from the [National Association of Realtors®](#). If you suspect you’ve been a victim of wire fraud, contact your bank and report it immediately to the [FBI’s Internet Crime Complaint Center](#).

###

The Pennsylvania Association of Realtors® is a trade/professional association that serves more than 38,000 members in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.