McKean County Association of Realtors
30 Fraley Street
Kane, PA 16735

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Confirm Online Financial Requests

MCKEAN COUNTY – We do nearly everything online these days.

Browsing property listings on realtor.com® or searching for a Realtor® online are generally safe ways to start your buying or selling journey. However, exercise caution when any finances become involved.

"Real estate cybercrime has unfortunately become more common," said McKean County Association of Realtors President Kathy Obermeyer. "Hackers can easily create a similar email addresses of a lender or real estate agent, so it may look like one of them is asking you to wire money for your transaction, but it's actually a scammer."

It's important to confirm any kind of financial transaction verbally over the phone with a phone number previously associated with your agent or lender or in-person with your Realtor® or financial representative because once money is wired to a fraudulent account, it's typically very difficult to recoup.

Consumers should also be cautious about rental or for-sale properties where the "landlord" or "owner" is unable to let you see the property in person, but promises to leave a key and/or paperwork once a payment is received.

"There have been cases of scammers using real listing photos of homes that they have no association with and receiving down payments or the first month's rent," she said. "Then when the victim tries to proceed with moving in, they learn they have been scammed."

If a housing situation seems too good to be true, it probably is. Keep an eye out for red flags or anything that seems fishy. The best way to avoid being scammed in a real estate case is to never wire or send any money until you have verbally confirmed the legitimacy with your real estate professional.

"This is one of the biggest financial transactions of your life," Obermeyer added. "Be diligent throughout the whole process."

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The McKean County of Association is the voice for real estate in McKean County.