

## **Security measures as important as décor**

Good security should be an essential factor when purchasing your new home. Buying decisions are quite often made on the size of kitchens or bathrooms with little consideration given to the importance of a good home security package.

As a security consultant, it's hard for me to comprehend that homebuyers are more interested in crown mouldings than a practical home-security system. Priorities need to be reassessed by new home purchasers to make a significant difference in crime statistics.

I'm not saying to quit looking at beautiful bathrooms and kitchens when considering a new home purchase. However, you do need to add good home security to your priority list to keep you and your family safer. New homes are a by-product of supply-on-demand. If the trend is bathrooms and kitchens, then bathrooms and kitchens it is.

We need to put an emphasis on home security in order to receive it as standard equipment. If new-home buyers start demanding higher standards in home security as "matter of fact" requests, then the industries priorities will have to change.

It always amazes me that new home buyers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on the purchase of a new home, fill it full of their worldly possessions, and lock everything up with a \$30.00 deadbolt and a 99-cent key. The reason most people don't think twice about it, is because it has come to be accepted, as long as the kitchen has an island and the ensuite has a soaker tub. Decor has overcome security in the new-home market and this is dangerous business. Dangerous because we are being led through the home-purchasing process by our wants and not our needs. Needs that should find builders replacing 60-watt light bulbs with 100- or 200-watt metal halide cube light fixtures with vandal-proof lenses.

Full-coverage burglar alarms should be standard equipment in new homes, with alarm contacts on all windows and doors (including upstairs). Most new home alarms do not have contacts on upstairs windows because of the time and costs involved for the builders.

All exterior doors should be of solid wood construction, assuring a good sturdy surface for the installation of a high-security deadbolt. This dynamic combination will guarantee you maximum protection against a forced entry attempt.

Every new home should have a built-in video intercom installed. With the decreasing costs of this type of technology, there is no excuse not to have one of these units installed as standard equipment. This product allows you to view and speak to visitors at your front door without having to open it.

Windows in hidden areas should be made of the strongest security glass available. Sliding glass doors should be secured with strong auxiliary locks and anti-lift shims installed in the top of the frame. Out-swinging doors should have blocker plates or astragals to seal off the gap between the door and the frame. A blocker plate would prevent a would-be burglar from prying between the door and the frame to gain entry.

And last but not least, builders or new home owners should make sure that phone lines are protected with steel reinforced boxes to prevent tampering.

By: Frank Fourchalk, Security Expert, Syndicated Columnist