

Beware offers from flimflamming real estate 'agents'

When crooks start showing up — or careless amateurs — you can be sure there's a lot of business to be had.

It happens during a general building boom. Everybody's a builder. It happens after a hailstorm. Everybody's a roofer. Wind flattens a bunch of fencing? Fence fixers come calling.

It always happens when one market, whether for home building, roofing, fencing, general repairs or whatever, stands strong when others around it are faltering.

Amateurs — and shysters, grafters and flimflam men and women — come out of the woodwork.

Outlaw realty agents

So, take this as another sign that the real estate market in Oklahoma is in good shape, and that reports of its demise — or even its weaknesses — are greatly exaggerated and misunderstood national news reports:

Out-of-state real estate agents not licensed to do business in Oklahoma are doing business in Oklahoma, and that's a no-no.

The Oklahoma Real Estate Com-

mission thought you should know: "Licensees from other states are entering Oklahoma with their clients and showing and negotiating for Oklahoma property without the broker or associate being properly licensed in Oklahoma.

"An out-of-state licensee must obtain a nonresident Oklahoma license prior to performing licensed activity in the state of Oklahoma, such as showing and negotiating for Oklahoma property.

"If a consumer works with a person who is unlicensed and that person performs licensable activities, certain protections afforded consumers under Oklahoma law will not be available."

Not-so-devilish details

This being regulation, it does get a little complicated, but not too much. The commission explained:

"Only a real estate broker is allowed to enter into a brokerage agreement with a consumer; howev-



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er, a sales or broker associate who is licensed and sponsored by the broker is authorized to enter into agreements with a consumer, but only in the name of the sponsoring broker. Further, sales associates and broker associates are prohibited from receiving compensation in connection with

the transaction except through their sponsoring broker."

Owners do good deeds

You want to sell or rent property that you own? Have at it. That's perfectly legal — if it's your name on the deed.

There's another exemption, too: "if a person is a salaried employee, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, of the owner (whose name appears on the deed) and in the regular course of their employment the person sells or leases property for the owner."

Other than that, you've got to have a license from the state of Oklahoma

to perform certain real estate activities in Oklahoma.

Licensed activities

- Soliciting for buyers, sellers, tenants or prospects.
- Negotiating, or trying to negotiate, a transaction for sale, lease, rent or exchange.
- Listing property for sale, whether residential, commercial, farm, ranch, recreation or any other kind.
- Showing or offering real property for sale or lease.
- Entering a property management agreement with the owner of real property.
- Renting vacation property.
- Soliciting listings for places for rent or lease.
- Advertising or holding yourself out as someone engaged in these activities.

If you're not sure about someone, go to www.orec.ok.gov and click on "Real Estate Licensee Search." Or call 521-3387, or toll-free (866) 521-3389.

And if you're not a licensed real estate agent, don't act like one. It's illegal and it makes us all look bad.