

Ask Technical Terry: SentiSmart™ Codes, Pending Listings, Batteries

 Ask Technical Terry is a series RMLS™ aims to offer once a month. RMLS™ subscribers will drive the content—submit any question about RMLS™ to Technical Terry in the comments or by emailing communications@rmls.com. Don't be shy—we won't identify you by name.

Hey TT-

Help! I witnessed a fellow REALTOR® giving out a SentiSmart™ lockbox access code to their buyers! I was at a coffee shop and overheard this person on the phone, walking someone through the process of opening a lockbox, including retrieving the lockbox serial number and using a lockbox code. When I approached them about the issue a few minutes later, they said they did not want to drive all the way to the coast to show a vacant condo. Is this OK?

Pensive in the Pearl

As you probably know, this is a major violation of the RMLS™ Rules and Regulations as well as the SentiLock user agreement! This person could face sanctions as high as \$2500 and expulsion from RMLS™!

Perhaps you've noticed that RMLS™ has run an article on the RMLSweb desktop a few times over the past several months about this kind of issue. Detailing the liability concerns would take far too long, but this type of behavior strikes at the very core of REALTOR® professionalism. When the RMLS™ Board of Directors made the decision to transition to SentiLock, one of the key points considered was the numerous ways to open a lockbox. Unfortunately this enhanced capability has enhanced

the potential for misuse as well. This is one example of misuse made possible because of technology.

SentriLock is a REALTOR®-owned company, and as such is keyed into the trends and behaviors of REALTORS® on a national level. SentriLock has developed new reporting capability for administrators (such as the MLS) that allow for GPS correlation between the cell phone using SentriSmart™ to generate an access code and the physical location of the lockbox. If you and your cell phone are in Portland generating a SentriSmart™ access code for a lockbox in Coos Bay, the SentriLock system will flag it. As you can imagine, this technology provides RMLS™ with much more information about this kind of behavior. Please continue to report suspected transgressions to RMLS™, but also be aware that we are watching these reports and responding accordingly.

Technical Terry,

One of my clients called me in a huff this morning. He was getting ready to leave for work when a random REALTOR® entered his house with clients! He and his wife accepted an offer last week and wasn't expecting to see more strangers inside his home. How can I ensure this client won't get any more surprises until moving day?

Frustrated in Forest Grove

I understand your frustration! This is another issue RMLS™ hears about with some regularity—REALTORS® entering a listing after an offer has been accepted and the listing is in pending status (PEN) on RMLSweb.

Everyone, listen up: if you enter a property currently in pending status on RMLSweb without the permission of the listing agent or owner, you could face some unpleasant repercussions! This activity is a violation of the RMLS™ Rules

and Regulations.

We emphasized this information in our recent blog post about the importance of following showing instructions, but it bears repeating. Before showing a property, check the current status of a listing before entering the property. Apps like RPR Mobile™ and HomeSpotter give you easy access to RMLSweb listing information in the field. Then if a listing is in pending status, do not hold a showing! It doesn't matter if the listing is vacant or occupied, if it's pending on RMLSweb, do not enter.

Dear Technical Terry,

The batteries died in my lockbox and I want to replace them. There's a *great* sale on CR123A batteries at my local bulk store, but they're not Panasonic batteries like the front desk staff at RMLS™ have told me they use exclusively. What's the big deal? Can't I use these for my lockbox replacement batteries?

Dead Batteries in the Dalles

It's sad, but true, DBD—not all CR123A batteries are exactly the same. In this case, the Panasonic batteries hold an extra circuit that ensures the batteries maintain a consistent three-volt power supply. SentiLock lockboxes require a constant three volts to function properly, meaning these are the batteries you'll need to buy for your SentiLock lockbox.

I know it's tempting to get whatever battery is easily available, but the lockbox will not function as reliably if it's not getting that constant three volts of juice. It is because of this that SentiLock will not support or warranty any lockboxes with non-Panasonic batteries in them.

RMLS™ recently created a document outlining some of the finer

points of SentiLock batteries. We've found Batteries Plus Bulbs or BatterySpace.com to be a fair place to purchase these batteries if you want to have extras on hand for that day when you get a low battery notification.