

Are Title Thieves Really Stealing Utah Homes?



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Story

If you've come across those infomercials touting services that promise to protect homeowners from fraudulent title theft, you might be wondering about the actual likelihood of such an event occurring. Rest assured, while title fraud is indeed a possibility, it's an exceptionally rare and unlikely occurrence.

In fact, earlier this year, several reputable local media outlets delved into the subject, seeking insights from experts. A notable example is KSL-TV's Matt Gephardt and Sloan Schrage, who explored the truth behind claims of title thieves in this eye-opening piece:

www.ksl.com/article/50334898/ads-claim-title-thieves-can-steal-your-home-but-can-you-really-lose-your-house

Benefits of Title Insurance – Built in coverage for marketable title, fraud & forgery

While the news coverage shed light on this issue, it's worth noting that numerous homeowners are already safeguarded by their title insurance policies, often acquired at the time of property purchase. An Owner's policy, in particular, encompasses protection against unmarketable titles, and many policies obtained since 2008 have extended coverage that includes safeguarding against post-policy forgery, fraud, and title-related complications. The specifics of coverage can vary, and deductibles might apply depending on the policy type. Remarkably, many policyholders could potentially have coverage that reaches up to 150% of their property's original purchase price.

Property Watch - Free service in some counties

For homeowners seeking a proactive approach to staying informed about their property's status, the Property Watch service is a remarkable resource available in select Utah counties. This service allows residents to stay in the loop about any recorded changes affecting their property. Once you enroll, you'll receive email notifications whenever a document is recorded that impacts your property's status.

Currently, this service is available in the following Utah counties:

Washington: <https://www.washco.utah.gov/2021/11/04/sign-up-for-property-watch/>

Salt Lake: <https://slco.org/data-services/PropertyWatch/PropertyWatch.aspx>

Uintah: <https://co.uintah.ut.us:8443/ords/ucdev/r/property-watch-signup/home>

Weber: https://www.webercountyutah.gov/forms/property_watch/

Cache: <https://www.cachecounty.org/recorder/propertywatch/faq.html>

Utah: <https://property-watch.utahcounty.gov/>

Daggett: <https://www.daggettcounty.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1324>

Uintah: <https://apps.uintah.utah.gov/ords/ucdev/r/property-watch-signup/home>

While the fear of title theft might be a headline-grabbing concern, the reality is that this type of fraud is an anomaly rather than the norm. Existing title insurance policies offer significant protection for homeowners, and the Property Watch service provides a valuable tool for staying informed about changes to your property.