

Important Security Plan Information for CMLS Members

The new generation of internet based access to MLS data has created a challenge to all Multiple Listing Service operations. Since CMLS moved from Maestro/PC Access to XMLSweb, access has been opened to access from any computer with Internet Access.

Our biggest challenge is people and/or companies accessing the MLS via logins and passwords that have been obtained without receiving proper training or obtained via unauthorized methods. Real estate professionals often may not realize that when they give out their login or password to a trusted person that the access information can be passed on to other people. This provides the opportunity to easily get out of control. Eventually, scores of people could access the MLS without becoming a member of the MLS (which helps define your value to the public) or even being a real estate agent.

Consolidated MLS has recently taken important steps to face the challenge that is prevalent in our entire industry – that of data security – and we wish to share information about this initiative with you, our member.

Even if a member never shares their password, it can be stolen or guessed. That risk can be somewhat reduced by using a very complex password and changing it often – but that's difficult to do for most users, and it doesn't fully solve the problem.

Limiting access to the information behind the MLS login is important for many reasons.

1. Listing data contains sensitive, private information, including showing instructions that in the wrong hands can lead to burglary and other crime.
2. Many of our members now store personal information about customers and clients in the MLS in the form of contact management and prospecting applications, and that information can be misused by someone else logging into your account.
3. MLS organizations around the country explore integration options with transaction management systems and other data sensitive systems, the MLS becomes the front door to a host of consumer and financial information protected by federal legislation. The need to protect this information is urgent!

In the near future, **CMLS will be implementing a proven security technology** that has been in use by millions of people in private industry and government for over a decade. This solution was researched at length by Clareity, a well-respected real estate consulting company. Several MLS vendors, including our current MLS vendor, are implementing this solution. In addition, this technology is being supported by many well known third party software vendors such as Wyldfyre and eNeighborhoods.

As this security initiative moves forward, CMLS will provide you with far more detail about how it will work, and how we as MLS members can appropriately protect access to the sensitive information entrusted to us.

Look for more information about SAFEMLS™