

Shopping Tips

- Answer the questions on the application completely and honestly.
- Do not sign a blank application.
- Do not pay the agent in cash. Make a check payable to the insurance company. And include the type of policy that you are paying for (auto or homeowners, etc.).
- If you are turned down for insurance, ask for the specific reason.
- Do not buy on price alone; consider coverage and service. Select a company and agent you feel you can trust.
- Do not forget to ask about discounts for safety and security devices (burglar alarms, fire alarms, dead bolts).
- Remember to use the Insurance Quotation Worksheet to see which company has the lowest price for you.
- Ask if the company gives a new home discount or multi-policy discount.
- Ask about the difference in price between a “named peril” policy and an “open perils” policy.
- Make sure your dwelling policy limits are at least 80% of the replacement cost of your home. If you do not have a recent appraisal, ask your agent to help you.
- Does the company offer an inflation guard endorsement?
- Discuss with your agent whether you should list your valuable items of personal property on a personal property schedule. Does the company offer full replacement cost coverage on your personal belongings?
- Ask about the difference in price for basic liability limits of \$100,000 and a higher limit such as \$300,000 or \$500,000.
- Companies are required by law to offer you water and sewer back-up coverage. If your property is subject to water, which backs up through the sewer or drains, make sure you get this coverage. You may have to pay extra.
- Companies are required by law to offer you building ordinance or law coverage. This provides protection when a building damaged by a covered peril must be repaired or rebuilt in a more costly manner because the original construction does not comply with current building codes. This coverage may cost you extra.

- Your homeowners policy has some provisions that may prevent you from receiving payment for a claim even if you have paid the premium. If your home or apartment is left vacant or unoccupied, some part of your coverage may be suspended automatically. When you plan a long vacation, or when you are moving either in or out of your home, or if your home will remain vacant for any other reason, you should ask your agent or company which coverages will be suspended.