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Cops warn real estate agents
Authorities say convicted sex offender posing as homebuyer

By Roman Gokhman, STAFF WRITER
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PLEASANTON — Police are warning real estate agents and the public about a man who has been asking about homes for sale over the past two weeks because he is a convicted sex offender and his behavior has been questionable.

The man — 41-year-old Daniel Duran — has not committed an arrestable offense, but his behavior coupled with his criminal record was enough to issue a public warning, Lt. Darrin Davis said.

"He's scared several women," Davis said. "The decision to disclose this ... was based on the totality of his behavior over the last three weeks. We felt we needed to put out the notice ... to protect the public."

Duran is a registered sex offender, listed with a San Jose address. He has a 1988 conviction for forced rape and a 1990 conviction for assault with intent to commit rape.

"It looks like he's been in the San Jose area since 1985," Davis said.

Duran has recently been seen frequenting various Pleasanton real estate offices and homes for sale, "posing as a potential home buyer," according to police.

Davis said Duran was interviewed by police and asked if he was actually interested in buying a house.

"He has been very evasive and doesn't want to provide any details on that," Davis said.

Reports of Duran's behavior began to surface on March 12, Davis said, and police launched an investigation a week later. His identity was confirmed when one person who met him entered his name on the California Megan's Law sex offender registry Web site.

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An agent at Keller Williams Realty on West Las Positas Boulevard, who requested anonymity, had several encounters with Duran.

Their first conversation was when she was in the conference room of her office by herself and he expressed interest in a house that was not on the market yet.

"He says, 'I'm so fortunate. God has cured me of my psychiatric problems and my bipolar (problems),' the agent said. "And then he closes the conference room door and he says, 'I want to save you.'"

He then had her repeat scripture with him, until she got up the nerve to tell him she had other things to do. She said she would try to get him into the home he wanted early, but said he would have to be pre-approved first.

"He was very scary," she said.

The following day, he came back and said, "God has chosen you to be my Realtor."

The agent then said Duran told her that he sat in front of the home he was interested in and watched people — and one woman in particular — come and go.

"He had talked to the neighbors — he knew more about the neighborhood than I did," the agent said.

Vanessa Parks, who works at Keller Williams, said Duran came to the business at least four times.

"The first time he came in, he came in through our back door entrance, which is for employees only," Parks said. "Someone found him wandering around back."

The agent said that she got a call from another real estate agent at a Morgan Hill office Friday who told her that Duran showed up and asked to see the agent's personal home.

"He was seen walking around a (downtown Pleasanton) home at 10 p.m., looking through windows," Davis said. "In another case, he confronted a woman walking down the street and asked her about houses for sale in the area. He also told her she was beautiful, and that beauty is a sin. (He said) that he wanted her to recite scripture with him."

The woman went to a friend's home and called police.

Anyone who comes in contact with Duran is asked to call police at 931-5100.

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