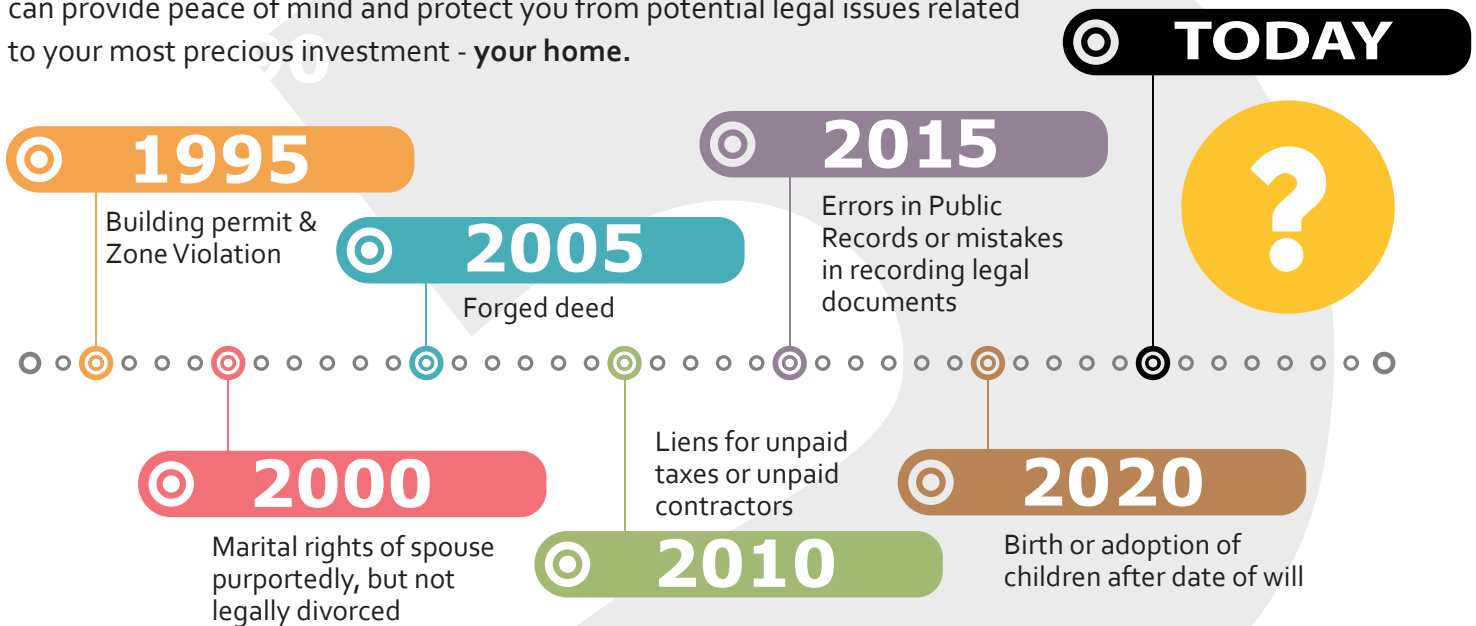


Is Title Insurance really optional?



When you purchase a home, it's important to ensure that there are no issues with the property's title and that the seller is the rightful owner. Any problems with the title can restrict your use of the property and result in financial loss. While title insurance may seem like an optional expense, it can provide peace of mind and protect you from potential legal issues related to your most precious investment - **your home.**



Once a sales contract has been accepted, a title professional will conduct a thorough search of public records to identify any problems with the home's title. This search involves reviewing land records dating back several years. Surprisingly, **more than one-third of all title searches reveal problems with the title.** However, title professionals work diligently to resolve these issues before closing. *For example, a previous owner may have hired a contractor to do some work on the property but never paid them in full, or the previous owner may have failed to pay local or state taxes.* Title professionals aim to resolve these issues before the closing date. Once a title policy is issued, you will be protected against any claim that is covered under your policy. The title company will pay the legal fees involved in defending your rights and any covered loss that arises from a valid claim. This protection remains in effect for as long as you or your heirs own the property and is obtained by paying a one-time premium at the time of purchase. If you have a mortgage on your home, the lender will require you to purchase a lender's title policy to protect their security interest in the property. Therefore, it is crucial not to consider your homeowner's policy as an optional item of choice.

Common Title Problems:

- ...using the property as collateral for an unpaid loan
- ...fraudulently claimed to be the sole owner
- ...failed to pay real estate taxes
- ...mistake in the recording of legal documents
- ...unpaid contractors
- ...reappearance of undisclosed or missing heirs
- ...misinterpretation of wills
- ...and the list goes on...

For a complete list of common title problems, please contact: