

May is National Moving Month

Follow these tips to ensure a “smooth move”

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Moving into a new home brings countless changes. New schools, new neighborhood, new friends, just for starters. The last thing you want to worry about is the efficiency and integrity of your moving company. Using a ProMover certified by the American Moving & Storage Association (AMSA) can help you rest easy about the quality of your mover. Here are ten tips to help you navigate the task of managing your move....

- 1) **Eliminate unwanted items.** Purge your home of old clothes, appliances, tools, furniture, or things you will never use again. Why pay to have them moved only to throw them out at a later date? Many of these items may be of use to the Goodwill, Salvation Army or a recycling center in your area.
- 2) **Start packing well before your move.** You will be amazed at how much “stuff” you have. Packing nonessential items early will give you momentum and ease the stress of trying to do everything at the last minute. When packing, mark your boxes with colored tape, stickers or a felt pen to indicate to which room the items go at your new location. Simplify your unpacking later by boxing items together which all go in the same room in your new location.
- 3) **Consider moving some irreplaceable items yourself.** Expensive jewelry, artwork, antiques, collections of cards, stamps, coins, etc. or other items may be best moved in your own vehicle. While any mover would pay for a broken item, money may not be able to replace that item, or the value may be difficult to assess. Items with sentimental or one-of-a-kind value may be best left under your control.
- 4) **Get multiple quotes from several movers.** All movers in Michigan are required to be licensed through the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC). Invite each mover from which you request a bid to visit your home, prepare an inventory of items to be moved and provide you a written estimate of the cost.
- 5) **What is a ProMover?** The American Moving & Storage Association offers a professional credential to movers nationwide which recognizes their experience, professionalism, integrity and expertise as related to making interstate moves. The Michigan Movers Association also offers a Michigan ProMover designation, authorized through AMSA, which recognizes movers in Michigan for expertise in intrastate and local moves. If you visit the MMA website www.mimovers.org you will see the ProMover logo next to every mover which has earned it. Hire a ProMover, and hire the best!

- 6) **Verify the authority of the mover you select.** You can go online at www.mimovers.org to determine if that company is a member of the Michigan Movers Association (MMA), and as a result, has the authority to make moves in Michigan of over 40 miles one way (an intrastate move). Virtually every legitimate mover in Michigan is a member of the MMA and you are welcome to contact the MMA directly to verify the credentials of any Michigan mover. The MMA's phone number in Lansing is 517-327-9207.
- 7) **Be aware of how pricing works.** Moves of under 40 miles one way within the state are called "local moves". The mover must be registered with the MPSC and show they are registered by having an MPSC sticker on each truck. Local moves are not regulated with regard to price, so your quotes could vary significantly. It will be based on the time needed to load, move and then unload your items. The price will typically be based on 2-3 men for X hours at X dollars per hour. *Intrastate moves* are moves of over 40 miles one way within the state of Michigan. All movers are required to use a "tariff" to compute the fee. That fee is based on weight of the items to be moved, distance traveled, plus a per-mile fuel surcharge. You can actually compute the fee yourself by using the Tariff Calculator under the "Tariff" tab on the site www.mimovers.org.
- 8) **Be aware: scam artists love the moving industry.** You may have heard the term "rogue mover" in the past in reference to a dishonest or scam move. There are no "scam movers" in Michigan. Our licensed and regulated movers are among the finest in the nation. Unfortunately, sometimes unscrupulous individuals, who have no connection with the moving industry will advertise on Craigslist or other internet media, offering cheap or discount moves. They are often not licensed, insured or legitimate. They may offer a low price, then hold your items, demanding a higher payment before unloading. Your quoted prices from 3-4 movers should all be similar as each mover used the same criteria to generate a quote. If three movers give you prices for an intrastate move which are similar, but a fourth offers a price half those amounts, be suspicious. Either they missed some items to be moved, or are operating "outside the tariff" which is illegal. Also, if you are moving over 40 miles within Michigan and are given an hourly quote, that is also illegal. An intrastate quote must be based on weight, distance and the fuel surcharge.
- 9) **The day of your move.** Okay, the big day is here! Move pets beforehand or take to a boarding house or somewhere so they won't be confused or scared by the activity. Any young children should be taken elsewhere to avoid injury or distraction. Be home that day to supervise and answer questions. If, several days before your move you see you won't be able to get everything packed, contact your mover and they can send packers to help you finish packing in time for moving day.
- 10) **If there is a problem.** Should something break during the move, inform your mover immediately. Some insurance is included in your moving agreement, but replacement of some items may need to be discussed and negotiated. If you have concerns with their service, pricing or any other issues, please contact the MMA and let us help facilitate a solution. Our goal, like the goal of every Michigan mover, is to make your move a pleasant and positive experience!