

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ABOUT MOVING . .**

We're happy to answer your questions or help you determine if a mover is properly licensed.

Feel free to contact us:

**Illinois Movers' and
Warehousemen's Association**

40 Adloff Lane, Suite 2
Springfield, IL 62703-6301

Phone: 888-791-2516 or
217-585-2470

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Patricia Smith McLaughlin
Executive Director



visit our website at
www.imawa.com

to check on movers operating in Illinois, contact:

Illinois Commerce Commission
527 East Capitol Avenue
Springfield, IL 62794-9281
phone 217-782-4654
Website: www.icc.illinois.gov

**It's time to move to
your new home**

*How can I find a smart
mover?*



Illinois Movers' and
Warehousemen's Association
www.imawa.com



Make smart choices before you move!

The vast majority of professional moving companies are reputable, honest, and dependable. Many are family-owned businesses that have been in the community, and their best source of business is a satisfied customer.

A good mover enjoys working with an informed customer. The secret is to be the mover you choose is a good mover! Don't be afraid to ask questions.

GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING!

Remember, prices that seem too good to be true, probably ARE too good to be true. Legitimate movers should have their license numbers on their license.

taxes, insurance, employee wages, benefits, and quality equipment. A legitimate mover must consider all these things when determining the price for service ... and so should you!

Congratulations on doing your homework! Inside are some tips to help you make smart choices about preparing to move your family's possessions to your new home.

Feel free to contact our association for more information, or visit our website www.imawa.com.

Quick tips for a smooth move

✓ At least a month ahead, set up a calendar for your move. Call your mover to reserve a moving date. Try to avoid the first and last weeks of the month if you can, since they are the busiest moving times.

✓ BEFORE your move, eliminate what you don't want or need.

✓ If you're doing your own packing, be careful about overloading the cartons. Be sure to use appropriate cartons so your goods will arrive safely. Carton tops should be flat and taped securely for easier handling and safe stacking on the truck. To avoid damage, do not

pack fragile articles in the same carton with heavy items. Mark FRAGILE cartons.

✓ DO NOT pack valuables (such as jewelry, money, etc.), medication, or important papers. The mover is not responsible for these items.

✓ Remember, it's first in, last out when loading any truck. Keep toiletries, medicines, and other necessities with you.

✓ **Ask your mover for more ideas on preparing for your move.** They can supply appropriate materials and helpful guidance to make it easier.

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**Think ahead! Smart choices will make your move a smooth move ...
and get everything in writing!!**

Check around. Ask friends, relatives, and business colleagues about movers they have used and liked. Be careful about relying only on references provided by the mover (would they provide a bad reference??) and do not believe everything you see in the mover's advertising. **Never, ever,** do business with a "phone number only" company. **Stop by unannounced** to see their place of business. Look at their equipment and buildings. Are they clean and well maintained? This is particularly important if you are placing your goods into storage. How about the employees? Are they neat and clean? Are they answering your questions or giving you the "bum's rush"? Observe moves in progress — are the movers careful with the property they're handling? Remember, you're entrusting all your worldly goods to the care of these people. Is your instinct a good one??

For your own protection, be sure the mover you hire is licensed. The mover must show its license number in **every** advertisement — and this includes their Internet website. Our office can help you, or you may call the Illinois Commerce Commission (see back panel for contact information) to verify the license and insurance and to check complaints that may have been filed about that mover.

Who will be responsible? Hiring an unlicensed person to do your move can set you up for trouble ... because the "bandit" is in control, you will have no recourse if things go wrong. If anyone is injured (whether the workers or others), or if anyone else's property is damaged during the move, **you could be held financially responsible.** An unlicensed mover is breaking

the law. Is that who you really want to trust with all your possessions? So avoid the cheap guy on the grocery store bulletin board or in the truck rental agency. It isn't worth it.

Be sure you know the actual name of the company you hire. A mover's van line affiliation is only significant as part of a larger network across state lines. Every van line agent is an independent contractor company (like a franchise) and is licensed independently.

Require a written estimate. That means the sales person should visit your home to look at everything you want to move. You should be asked to estimate your new home too, including stairs, trees, etc. Be sure to show the mover their plan to move. The ease of your move and the price will be determined by all these things, so don't hold anything back ... they won't throw in free time just because you "forgot" to tell them about the attic or backyard shed!

An estimate is not a guaranteed price. If you've been forthright about the items you want to move, come very close to the actual price. If you're quoted a price significantly lower than your other estimates, be very careful about choosing that mover. The service and overall quality of your move could be reduced, too.

Consider more than just the rate!! The lowest estimated price doesn't necessarily mean it will be the best move, *nor does it mean* that is the actual price you will pay. If you are quoted a price significantly lower than your other estimates, or if they "throw in" a lot of "free" things, be very careful about choosing that mover. The service and overall quality of your move could be reduced, too.

Loss and Damage Protection. Be sure you understand the type of loss and damage protection you agree to in your bill of lading (which is your contract). Basic moving rates only cover a minimal amount of protection, because customers have different needs based on the nature of their possessions. Some customers need \$500,000 of coverage, while others may need only \$5,000, or even no extra coverage. Extra coverage (based on value) is available for an extra. This coverage may be available in the form of a bill of lading in which you could give a bill of lading for the property you are moving. The form is assumed by the mover. Ask your mover for "Understanding Your Options for Loss and Damage Protection," a brochure prepared by IMAWA to explain your options for Illinois intrastate moves. Options on interstate moves are similar, but the amounts differ. **The time to make the decision about this coverage is before the move starts!**

For residential moves within Illinois, movers are not allowed to give you a discount except on certain limited local moves. Movers' rates must be published with the Illinois Commerce Commission. If the mover is offering you a lot of "freebies" (such as cartons, tape, etc.), before you move, ask questions. The mover's estimate should include the cost of the bill of lading. If you're quoted a price significantly lower than your other estimates, be very careful about choosing that mover. The service and overall quality of your move could be reduced, too.

For interstate moves (crossing the state line), movers may say they're offering you a discount. Be careful about choosing the mover with the lowest price if it is significantly lower than your other estimates. The larger the "discount" offered to you, the less revenue the driver (who does your work) is paid. Big "discounts" could result in cutting corners on the quality of your move.

Be aware of the law. Regulations for moving and storage within the state (intrastate) are different from moving from one state to another (interstate). All states have their own requirements for interstate moves, and some are more stringent than others. Check with the state movers' association or the state regulatory agency for more information.

What about storage? If your mover is taking custody of your property to place it into storage for you, be sure you know specifically where the storage will be. Inspect the warehouse. Are they taking good care of other customers' property? Is the warehouse licensed? In Illinois, a separate license is required, and the warehouse is regularly inspected.

This is not the same as a mini warehouse or self-storage warehouse. If you're paying a company to take care and custody of your property, for your protection the law does not allow them to store it in a mini warehouse or "public storage" type facility. **Be sure to receive a signed storage contract warehouse receipt,** which will include a detailed inventory of your goods, specify the storage rate, loss and damage protection, etc. **THIS IS YOUR CONTRACT.** A good warehouseman will not suggest long-term storage of your property in a mini warehouse or self-storage trailer. The risk of storing your property in a self-storage facility (mini-warehouse), be aware that it is like renting a nice garage in which to store your goods. Extreme temperature changes, mice and bugs, and security should be considered. Be sure to have a written lease. You should have your own lock and key for this type of storage, and you are responsible for any damage that occurs to your property.

**Contact us if we can assist you ...
and have a good move!**