

A move is a move, no matter how far away the new house is

by Ilyce_Glink

Matt and Paula recently moved out of their house so they could start their renovation project. They're adding on a three-story addition and renovating some of the existing space in the house. When they found a house across the street to rent, they were ecstatic. Their neighbor had bought a new house several months earlier and was willing to rent them his house for \$2,400 per month, for anywhere from six to 12 months. The terms were flexible (which is what you need in a renovation) and fell within their budget. Plus, the house was across the street. "We decided that we didn't even need to hire "real" movers since the rental was literally across the street," recalled Matt. He and his wife expected they'd cut the cost of the move in half to about \$400. While it all sounded just great on paper, the reality of moving with a company that doesn't move people for a living quickly washed over them like a cold wave. The "movers" were actually a group of guys who pick up and deliver furniture for a local reupholster. "They were incredibly careful with the furniture, but when it came to moving boxes, and getting the boxes where they needed to go, it didn't work out so well," Matt explained. Meanwhile, Matt and Paula didn't realize exactly how much stuff they had, and thought they'd be able to carry over a few boxes and armloads of clothes. Instead, they found themselves running to the local office supply store to buy boxes and packing tape at retail - "Not the most cost-efficient way of doing things," admitted Matt - which cost them time as well as money. The movers gave Matt and Paula an estimate of 4 hours to complete the move. They quoted them a cost of \$375. But the move took much longer than expected and Matt wound up paying them \$800, plus the cost of the packing materials. "Not only did we not save any money, but it was a much bigger hassle than we remembered our last move," Matt said. "Of course, we didn't have kids and all the stuff we have now." And then there was the expectation that moving across the street would be simple and easy. "We underestimated the complexity of our move, and for what? We would have saved maybe a couple of hundred bucks if it all worked out perfectly," Matt added. Whether you're moving down the street or across the country, spending a few minutes preparing for your move will save you time and money. Here are a few things to consider before hiring the movers: -Throw away as much as you can before you start packing. If you take junk, you'll be throwing it away or finding places to store it on the other side. -Start collecting packing materials as soon as you know you're moving. Save your newspapers, and order boxes and packing tape online from discount stores. -Sign up for your new utility accounts. Don't expect the seller (or landlord) to set up your new electrical, cable, gas, water or telephone accounts for you. Start this process at least three weeks before the move. -Reserve the elevators. If you live in, or are moving to, a condominium or co-op, you'll probably have to reserve elevators on the day you hope to move. Since most buildings only allow one or two moves a day (they'll only allot one elevator to the move), you'll need to call weeks ahead of time or risk losing your preferred moving day. -Discontinue delivery services at your existing home. If you get anything delivered (newspapers, milk, dry cleaning, laundry, or videos), be sure to change the delivery address on the account. And don't order anything that is scheduled to be delivered to your old address within a week of your move. You don't want it to turn up after you're already gone. -Change of address cards or email. If you're mailing change of address cards, try to do this at least two weeks before you move. If you're e-mailing everyone, send these out a week or two ahead of time, and then again announcing that you're now living in your new home (with the address and telephone numbers). Don't forget to stop by your local post office to fill out your change of address card at least two weeks before your move. (You may have to do it again later.) © 2007 Real Estate Matters - Distributed By Tribune Media Services, Inc.

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