

UNDERSTANDING MAJOR HOME & HOARDING CLEANOUT COSTS

FIELD RESOURCE

A practical, printable guide for evaluating scope, labor, disposal, access, safety considerations and project complexity.

Why Cleanout Costs Can Vary So Much

A major cleanout is not priced by square footage alone. Two homes of the same size can require very different levels of labor, disposal capacity, equipment and time. A smaller residence with dense accumulation, blocked access and heavy materials may require substantially more work than a much larger home with light clutter. A reliable estimate should consider the actual conditions of the property and the outcome the referring professional is trying to achieve.

KEY PRINCIPLE: Cost is driven by the combination of volume + labor + disposal + access + safety + special handling + project duration.

Major Cost & Scope Factors

1. Volume & Density of Contents	How much material must actually leave the property? Dense floor-to-ceiling accumulation generally requires more handling, sorting, loading and disposal than ordinary clutter.
2. Labor & Crew-Hours	Crew size, lifting requirements, sorting, bagging, loading, cleanup and the number of working days are major cost drivers.
3. Disposal Weight & Fees	Landfill charges, container costs, transfer fees and unusually heavy debris can materially affect the final project cost.
4. Property Access	Stairs, basements, attics, narrow hallways, long carry distances, blocked pathways, limited parking and difficult loading areas increase labor time.
5. Large / Heavy Items	Appliances, mattresses, furniture, safes, oversized objects and other difficult items may require additional manpower or special handling.
6. Material Removal	Approved removal of carpet, flooring, limited non-structural drywall or other damaged materials adds labor, loading and disposal volume.
7. Safety & Site Conditions	Sharp objects, animal waste, pests, unstable surfaces, strong odors or other site conditions may require added precautions, PPE or outside specialists.
8. Sorting / Items to Preserve	Projects requiring careful separation of documents, keepsakes, medications, valuables, donations or retained belongings take more time than unrestricted removal.
9. Special Disposal Streams	Tires, electronics, appliances, chemicals and other regulated or restricted materials may require separate handling or an approved disposal facility.

10. Equipment & Containers	Roll-off containers, trailers, dollies, demolition tools, lifting equipment or other job-specific resources can change project cost.
11. Exterior Areas	Porches, yards, sheds, garages and abandoned exterior debris can significantly expand the scope beyond the interior residence.
12. Documentation & Coordination	Site visits, written scopes, photographs when appropriate, change documentation, completion records and coordination with authorized parties require project-management time.

Printable APS / Referring Professional Pre-Assessment Checklist

This checklist can help organize the information needed for an initial cleanout discussion. Check only what is known or directly observed. It is not necessary to complete every item before requesting an estimate.

PROPERTY AREAS AFFECTED	
☐ Living room / common areas	☐ Garage
☐ Kitchen / dining area	☐ Porch / deck
☐ Bedroom(s)	☐ Yard / exterior
☐ Bathroom(s)	☐ Shed / outbuilding
☐ Basement / cellar	☐ Multiple / entire residence
☐ Attic	
OBSERVED CONTENT / REMOVAL NEEDS	
☐ Accumulated household belongings	☐ Boxes / paper accumulation
☐ Bagged or loose trash	☐ Clothing / textiles
☐ Furniture	☐ Construction or damaged materials
☐ Mattresses / box springs	☐ Carpet / flooring removal may be needed
☐ Appliances	☐ Limited drywall / material removal may be needed
☐ Electronics	
ACCESS & LOGISTICS	
☐ Blocked or narrow walking paths	☐ Interior access currently restricted
☐ Stairs involved	☐ Utilities unavailable or uncertain
☐ Long carry distance to truck/container	☐ Property is occupied during cleanup
☐ Limited parking or loading access	☐ Animals present on property
POTENTIAL SITE CONCERNS - OBSERVATIONAL ONLY	
☐ Animal waste observed	☐ Water damage / moisture observed
☐ Insects / pests observed	☐ Unstable or damaged flooring
☐ Broken glass / sharp objects	☐ Unknown containers or materials
☐ Strong odors	☐ Need for additional professional evaluation

Information That Helps Produce a Better Estimate

When appropriate and permitted by the referring organization, the following information can help a cleanup provider understand the project before or during a site assessment. Do not transmit confidential client information through ordinary email or web forms unless your agency's policies permit it.

■ General property location / service area	■ Approximate size or number of affected rooms
■ Photographs of property conditions, when appropriate and authorized	■ Areas that must be cleaned or cleared
■ Items or categories that must remain	■ Known access restrictions or scheduling limitations
■ Known large / heavy items	■ Known disposal concerns or special materials
■ Whether the residence will remain occupied	■ Desired completion outcome
■ Requested timeline or deadline	■ Authorized decision-maker / approval process

Scope Changes: Why They Matter

Major cleanouts sometimes reveal conditions that could not reasonably be seen during the initial assessment. Examples may include additional debris behind accumulated contents, previously inaccessible rooms, damaged materials below carpet, concealed heavy items, or disposal categories that require separate handling. When significant work falls outside the approved scope, it should be identified and communicated before additional charges are incurred whenever circumstances reasonably allow.

INITIAL SCOPE What is known, visible and authorized at the time of estimate.	DISCOVERED CONDITIONS New conditions found after access or removal begins.	CHANGE AUTHORIZATION Additional work should be documented and approved when required.
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What This Guide Does - and Does Not - Do

This guide is a planning and communication resource. It is not a structural inspection, environmental assessment, medical evaluation, code-compliance determination, hazardous-material assessment, or statement of Kansas APS/DCF policy. Conditions involving suspected hazardous materials, structural instability, active infestation, biohazards, utilities, or other specialized risks may require evaluation or services from appropriately qualified professionals.

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