





Get A *Move-On*

by Mara Soloway

Moving is among the top most stressful events we can experience in our lives, but planning ahead and using the right resources can help minimize some of that stress. Our moving tips can help you to stay organized and avoid some of the common pitfalls. Begin your new life in the Fulshear-Katy area without too much hassle!



USING A MOVING COMPANY

Using a professional moving company will mostly guarantee your belongings arrive intact and within a certain timeframe. Begin your search for a mover by asking acquaintances for references and looking online at reviews of nationally known and local companies.

Ask for the company's U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) number and Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) number. Every reputable carrier that delivers to Texas will have these numbers. Use them to screen the companies by verifying that they have a license to operate and for any complaints filed against them:

- Confirm a company's license at protectyourmove.gov, txdmv.gov and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), safersys.org.
- Check for complaints with the Better Business Bureau's Houston office: 713-868-9500, houston.bbb.org.

TYPES OF ESTIMATES

Consider having at least three companies come to your home to give cost and time estimates and to discuss contracting specifics. Estimates are usually free and are based on the distance to the new location and the weight of household goods being shipped. The estimate should describe the amount and type of items and their condition, where and how far your home is from Fulshear or Katy, additional insurance options, dates of pick-up and delivery, and other specifics. Three types of estimates are generally offered:

- With the binding estimate, the mover guarantees the cost based on the weight of an itemized list; the customer pays exactly the price given regardless of whether the truck weighs more or less than estimated once it is loaded.
- A non-binding estimate is based on the estimated weight of the customer's belongings, but the true cost depends on the final weight. The customer is ultimately charged for what the truck weighs once it is loaded. Beware of estimated prices that sound too good to be true.
- The not-to-exceed estimate is usually the best for moving out of state. The mover gives a binding estimate, and if the weight of the shipment is less than the original estimate, the mover reduces the cost.

An estimator coming to your home needs to see everything - don't overlook items in spaces such as the attic, garage and backyard. Adding extra items that have not been

itemized when the moving van arrives will increase your cost. Movers also will want to know of any circumstances that will complicate the unloading of goods, such as having to park far from the home or having several stories of stairs to negotiate; these may result in added costs.

Once signed by both parties, the estimate often becomes your order for service. This, along with the bill of lading (contract) and inventory list are the basic documents a mover should provide and sign. Read everything carefully and have the documents with you on moving day and when you move in to your new home. Print these if they come electronically and put them with all other paperwork in your moving documents organizer.

DIY MOVING AND PACKING

Do-it-yourselfers who wish to pack and move their goods themselves also have options to rent equipment from nationally known and local companies. Look online for a moving calculator that will help you estimate how much cubic space (volume) your goods will fill. The rental company will match that figure with the right size truck and number of boxes you'll need. Don't forget a hand truck; consider a separate appliance dolly.

Get the packing process organized from the start - be meticulous about labeling boxes with a number, some of the contents and what room they belong in. Record this information in a spreadsheet or paper list to which you can also add a brief description of the contents. Add a printed version to your moving documents organizer.

Different size boxes have different uses. Use small boxes for your heavier items such as books, glassware, dishes and tools. Fill to capacity, but be mindful that too much weight will make it hard to lift. Put soft items like bedding and towels in larger boxes.

Protect fragile pieces and dishes with bubble wrap or packing paper. Boxes with fragile contents should be placed near the top of the truck and storage unit if you rent one.

Plastic storage containers offer visibility and don't require packing tape.

As boxes get filled and labeled, store boxes from each room together in the garage or other holding area.

How much tape and how many boxes will you need? One estimate is that 30 small, 10 medium and 10 large boxes will require six rolls of tape with two or three passes on the bottom of the smaller boxes with heavier contents.

While you can save the money packing the boxes yourself, consider that movers will pack the truck professionally, arranging everything so it doesn't get damaged and unload carefully when you arrive in Fulshear-Katy. Another important consideration is a person's physical ability to do the labor of boxing, lifting and carrying boxes during move-out and move-in.

STORAGE UNITS

Using a storage facility to hold belongings is a good option for anyone who arrives in Fulshear or Katy before their living arrangements have been finalized. Contact the facility as soon as possible to discuss the timeframe and the amount of storage needed.

Paul Fortugno, property manager of Move It Storage-Fulshear Bend, explained that the location's website allows current and potential renters to see the sizes and floorplans of available units and to complete the rental process online if they choose.

"Customers can pay their monthly rent, set up reservations and move into vacant units without having to set foot in the office," Fortugno said. "While self-storage is still very much an industry based on face-to-face interactions, we have enabled customers to start and complete the entire rental process from the comfort of their homes."

People are using storage units in new ways, according to Fortugno. "Traditionally, we think of self-storage mainly being used to hold household items that tend to take up valuable residential space. Over the last couple years, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of units being rented by current residents who are staging houses that are in the process of being sold," he said.

"We have also seen an increase in the number of local businesses - everyone from coffee shops to larger retailers - renting storage to help with the excess items they now must order due to supply chain issues. Unfortunately, retail orders must grow but the on-site storage options for these businesses stays the same."

USING A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

Hiring a professional organizer is a recent trend that can facilitate the moving process. Rebecca Garcia, owner of Dynamic Organizing Solutions, LLC in the Southwest Houston area, specializes in the whole process of decluttering, packing, unpacking, and organizing for local or long-distance residential moves. She explains some of

Elaine Everett's Lighting

Elaine Everett's Lighting is conveniently located at the corner of Spring Green and Cinco Terrace. Our unique mix of home accessories, ceiling fans, decorative lighting and hardware is unlike any other store in Katy. All three of the owners are residents of Katy and have a combined total of 50 years of lighting and hardware experience. Our mission is to help clients customize their house and transform it into their home.

WE SELL

CEILING FIXTURES
WALL FIXTURES
FANS
BATHROOM
LAMPS
OUTDOOR
HOME ACCENTS
DOOR HARDWARE
CABINET HARDWARE
AND SO MUCH MORE...

713-554-3915 | www.eelights.net

9727 Spring Green Blvd. Ste #500
Tuesday-Friday 9-6 • Saturday 10-3



MOVING TIPS

the advantages to hiring a professional organizer.

Savings in Time. "I feel the biggest thing is the time saved by not having to do the prepacking tasks, then the packing, and, once you arrive at the new location, the unpacking, putting things in place, and getting rid of the boxes and trash," she said.

Reduced stress. "Another big benefit is that it lowers the client's stress level. Most people don't find it enjoyable to pack and unpack and all that goes with it. My employees and I do it to give satisfaction to our clients." Garcia can relate to the stress involved: she has moved 15 times and has learned how to streamline the whole process.

Reduces the number of vendors with whom the client has to interact and thus frees the client to do other productive tasks. When contracted for personal or concierge services, the professional organizer can save the client the headache of working with the vendors (e.g., movers, cleaners and appraisers) and perform tasks like errands to make life easier for the client. For example, Garcia has shopped for food to fill the refrigerator and taken pets to boarding or a pet hotel prior to the move.

Can reduce moving costs. By decluttering first to reduce the number of boxes, the weight of the items going on the truck is reduced and thus the cost as well.

Beginning the Process

When a client is moving locally, professional organizers can help facilitate the moving process from beginning to end. They can help to declutter, sort, organize, pack and handle vendors in the originating location, and, with local moves, meet the client at the new location to unpack and organize there. Dynamic Organizing Solutions will organize the move with the moving company, if the client contracts with it to do so.

For those moving to another city who want the services of a professional organizer when they arrive, Garcia will connect them with a fellow member of the National Association of Productivity and Organizing (NAPAO) in the new location.

An inventory of the client's belongings can be a part of the process. "We assist the client as early as possible to determine what they're going to keep, toss, donate or sell before they pack everything. Depending on

the items, Dynamic Organizing Solutions can work with NAPAO to find vendors for an estate sale, junk and furniture pick-up services, appraisers, paper shredders, cleaning service and others."

Often, people contact Garcia shortly before the move just for packing services. She and her team organize boxes by room, labeling them appropriately.

"Everything initially depends on size of the home, how full the home is of belongings – for instance, a client could be a minimalist and not have a whole lot. But there are clients who have accumulated things for 30 years," Garcia said.

That size determines the number of organizers if the client is willing to have more than one person in their home and handling their belongings. Another consideration is the client's budget for having organizers assist them with the process.

An organizer has to express understanding when clients find it difficult to part with certain belongings. "I don't want this process to be mechanical where we just go in and put things in place or pack things in boxes. I think it's very important to understand the client: some of their background, what their goals are, why they're holding on to things. Being nonjudgmental and compassionate is very important for any organizer," Garcia said.

Arriving at the new location

If contracted for concierge services in the Houston area, Garcia and her team will arrive at the new location long before the movers do to make sure that certain details have been handled.

After everything has been moved in, they unpack and organize. "But that's what we want – to leave the home so it's set up and ready to live in."

TIMELINE FOR MOVING

8 weeks before

According to Garcia, earlier is better when it comes to getting organized for a move. Eight weeks before is a perfect time to allow the client to get to know the organizer's process.

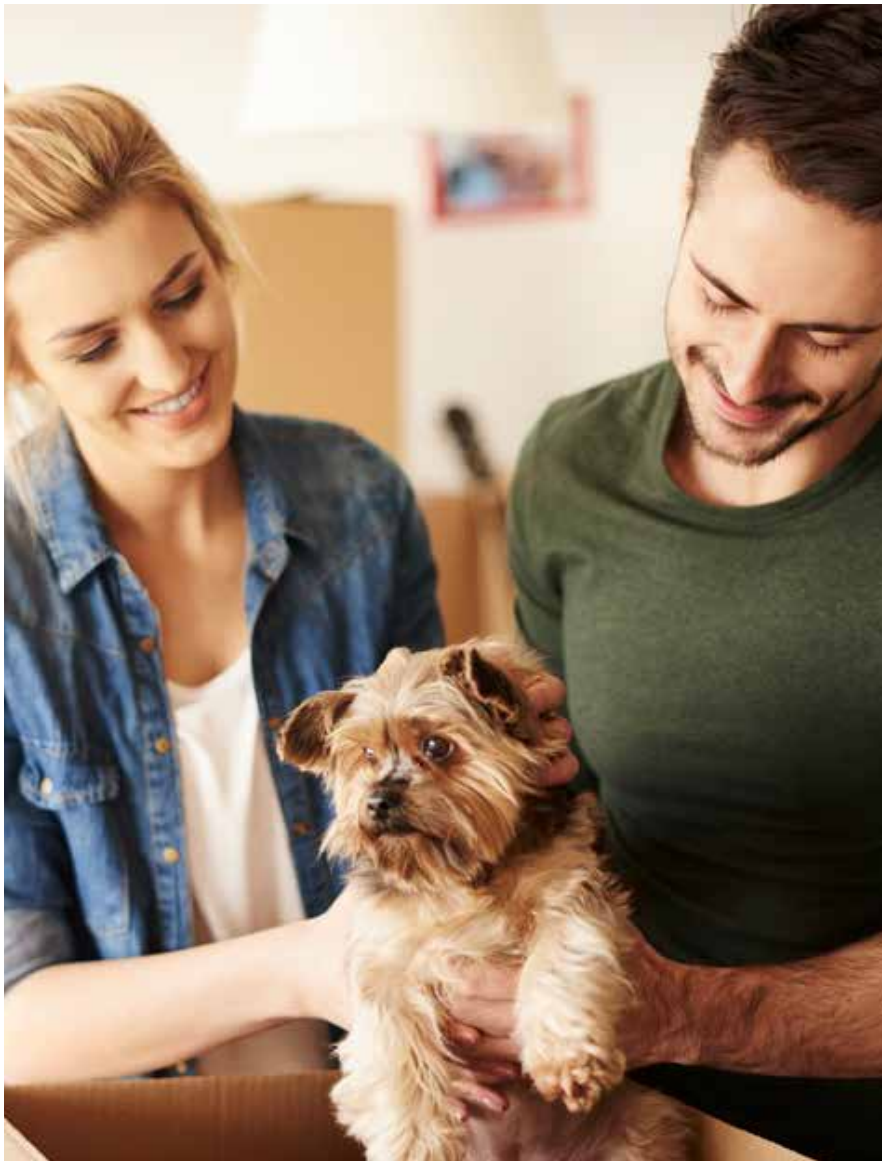
Prepare now to consolidate all printed and electronic documents related to the move together in a paper file organizer.

The generally accepted rule is that movers ask for five weeks from when they pack your current home to when they make the delivery to your new home. Start getting estimates at this eight-week point so you can make an informed choice by week 6.

Before movers arrive to take inventory of your belongings, start deciding what items to keep, donate, sell or throw away if you are not working with an organizer. This will prepare you to have a garage sale by the third week before you move, or use an online selling platform if you feel comfortable doing so.

Find a space to keep these items away from movers:

- Gather relevant printed financial and legal documents that you don't want to be packed. Put these with your moving documents folder.
- In tandem with the inventorying and organizing, use one or two boxes or suitcases for other necessary items that will stay with you during for your trip and the first few nights in your new home (e.g., valuable jewelry, prescriptions, toiletries, toilet paper, clothes, linens, plates and utensils).



- On moving day, add all cell phones, laptops, tablets and chargers.

Hazardous chemicals such as propane and paint are forbidden to transport; begin to dispose of them properly.

Changing your address:

- Visit USPS.com/move for how to change your home address online. If you don't have an address yet, the post office can hold your mail until you have one.

- Log on to your user account to change your address with relevant governmental entities such as the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs.

- It takes approximately six weeks to change the addresses for magazine subscriptions. Visit each magazine's website to do this efficiently.

6 weeks before

Book the moving company for a specific move date; reserve a truck if you are moving yourself.

See our Pets section for advice on moving with companion animals and our Healthcare section for medical tips while moving.

5 weeks before

If you have opted to do your own packing, it's not too early to begin packing nonessentials.

Start these tasks that require a month's notice for cancellation:

- Contact current utilities and other service providers to close out service and the new providers in Fulshear or Katy to set up service at your new residence in time for your move-in date.

- You also will likely need a month to cancel memberships to health and fitness clubs, civic organizations, daycare, and any delivery services. It might be possible to transfer your membership if the same entity exists in the Fulshear-Katy area.

- If you are renting, notify your landlord.

4 weeks before - a busy time

If you are a DIY mover and are having professional movers load and unload your rental truck, begin looking for teams in your area and in Fulshear and Katy to secure their services.

Give your lawn care team, cleaning services and other vendors notice of the last day you need their services.

Begin to make your travel plans, especially if you are flying, to get the best deal.

Have your vehicle serviced if you are making the drive. If you are flying, you will need to contact an auto transporter to have your car shipped here.

If you have children, let the school they are currently attending know of the family's relocation. Ask for copies of school records and keep them with you in your moving documents organizer. The specifics of enrolling new students in Katy ISD and Lamar CISD are available at katyisd.org and lcisd.org.

3 weeks before

Begin taking stock of the food you have on hand and plan what you will eat, what you might take as you travel (e.g., snacks and fruit), and what you will give away to friends or a food pantry.

Can your health, home and auto insurance be transferred or will you need to find new policies?

Contact relevant agents with questions.

2 weeks before

Do you want to host a going-away party? Keep it simple to keep stress to a minimum.

Confirm dates and times with your moving or trucking company. If you live

in an apartment, reserve the elevator for moving day and obtain a parking permit for the truck or van if necessary.

1 week before

Let credit card companies and banks know your new address, the dates of your travel plans and relocation so any charges you make won't be declined.

Empty your safety deposit box and turn in the keys.

Prepare your outdoor items for moving by draining water from hoses and properly disposing of gasoline from equipment.

Start planning for a final cleaning. Keep cleaning supplies from being packed for a last once-over after the movers have left. Give leftover supplies to a neighbor.

Confirm that the professionals you've hired to unload your DIY truck will be at your new location and be on time.

1 day before

Defrost your refrigerator if necessary.

Have your moving documents readily available for when the movers arrive. Double check your boxes or

suitcases that will be traveling with you; don't let the movers pack them. Have cell phones charged.

Moving day

Be up early to meet the move team and take them on a walk-through to see what items are going, what if anything will be left behind, and what items are breakable. Keep children and pets out of the way of the movers.

You will be given important documents including your bill of lading. Sign when you are satisfied that the documents are correct. Do not sign any incomplete documents. Keep the documentation in your moving organizer.

Double-check as movers clear out each room, attic, basement, garage and yard that nothing has been left behind. After they leave, take a last look around to make sure windows and doors are secured.

Gather your personal items, moving documents organizer, travel boxes and suitcases. Have a safe journey to your new home!

Moving In

While the moving company or team that you hired is unloading your belongings at your new home, at a minimum verify that everything on your inventory list has been delivered if you don't have time to look through all the boxes as they arrive. Take note of how long your mover gives you to file a claim if anything is lost or damaged; it is generally up to nine months.

Welcome to the Fulshear-Katy area!



Greater Houston

REAL ESTATE PARTNERS

Building our circle one relationship at a time.

A BROKERAGE DEDICATED TO HIGHLY SERVICING ALL OF YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS WHILE BUILDING A LASTING RELATIONSHIP.

11525 S Fry Road, Suite 106, Fulshear, Texas 77441

832.913.5505 • info@GreaterHoustonREP.com

www.GreaterHoustonREP.com