



LEGACY TEXAS TITLE

USEFUL MOVING INFORMATION

Moving fraud has been on the rise for the last 10 to 15 years, with the proliferation of Internet vendor sites making it easier to fake credentials and testimonials.

Here are some tips for avoiding fraud and enjoying a seamless move:

1. Ask for recommendations from friends and family

You can research a mover online until the cows come home, but the fact is that websites are easy to put up and take down, online testimonials are easy to fake, and Internet credentials are just words. Talking to a friend or family member, or soliciting the advice of a trusted real estate agent, is a better way to obtain the names of reputable companies.

2. Investigate

There are several options for investigating movers, including government sites like **ProtectYourMove.gov**, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) site, **FMCSA.gov**. There are also private websites like **MovingScam.com**, which maintains a "black list" of over 376 movers. Some states have consumer mover-advocate associations as well.

3. Make sure the moving company visits your home

Carl Walter, Vice President of Mayflower, recommends having the vendor visit your home before the big day. He says, "There are lots of ins and outs with moving; it can be complicated. Make sure the company sends someone to your home to look around and talk to you about what you need." Good companies will spend 20 minutes or more with a potential client answering questions and giving packing tips.

4. Get three estimates

Shop around and get three estimates, in writing, after the aforementioned home visit. This is especially important for state to state moves, where the logistics are even more critical. Walter cautions against simply accepting the lowest bid. "It can be a red flag if one of your three bids is much lower than the others," says Walters. "It's not always a scam, but ask yourself, why is it so low?"

5. Don't pay your bill upfront

Some companies require a down payment or deposit as high as 25 percent of the total move, especially for a state-to-state relocation. Reputable companies should not require you to pay everything, or even half, upfront.

Read more: <http://moneywatch.bnet.com/spending/blog/home-equity/moving-scams-5-tips-to-avoid-moving-fraud/4774/#ixzz1PZ9yRDvs>