



National Moving Month - Organizations give seven, smart on- and offline tips for protecting families, possessions to help Chicago lower from #3 in U.S. complaints

Chicago -- May 14, 2013 – After New York and Los Angeles, Chicago holds the third spot in the U.S. for the largest number of interstate moving complaints by city. Officials from the Illinois Commerce Commission, the American Moving & Storage Association and the Illinois Movers and Warehousemen's Association have joined with association members and the Chicago and Northern Illinois Better Business Bureau to drive these numbers down with better education and enforcement programs.

Each year 35 million Americans move, and 1.4 million moving-related inquiries and 9,300 complaints are made against movers¹. In Illinois, these numbers on average are now getting remarkably lower, thanks to good programs for movers, including new license applicants. More than 15,000 people are employed in the industry in Illinois, generating \$1.45 billion in annual revenue from 250,000 shipments.²

May is National Moving Month, and these industry leaders are urging consumers to be smart as the busy season for relocations runs through September. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has now issued revised guidelines for knowing: “Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move.”³

“Many consumers get moving referrals from friends, family, neighbors and corporate relocation experts. Others turn to the Internet. Uninsured and unlicensed means unprofessional and these types of movers are common online. They turn up the heat during the busy summer moving season by offering prices too good to be true,” said Doug Scott, chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission. “We urge consumers to be smart and to protect their families and their possessions. We are here to help and to make moving to, or within, Illinois a great experience.”

Consumers are encouraged to know the appropriate state agency responsible for intrastate moves. Collectively, FMCSA and these groups offer seven smart off- and online tips for avoiding scams:

- **Research licensed and insured companies and don't trust websites.** For interstate moves, look for a certified ProMover who is a member of the [American Moving & Storage Association](#). For intrastate moves, use a member of the [Illinois Movers' and Warehousemen's Association](#).
- **Check the firm's operating authority.** Use www.icc.illinois.gov to confirm the license number in all marketing materials, including websites and social media platforms. Every interstate (state-to-state) moving company is licensed by the U.S. Department of Transportation and has a Motor Carrier number issued by FMCSA, also displayed in marketing materials. Verify the validity at www.protectyourmove.gov
- **Look for "bricks and mortar."** Professional movers proudly post a street address and phone number. Do a Google Maps search to confirm the address exists.
- **Get three written in-home estimates.** Only use estimates by a professional mover who visits your home. Never say yes to a phone estimate.
- **Avoid companies that require deposits or down payments.** Interstate movers cannot require payment before a move. Once possessions are in a truck and the move paid for, all leverage is lost.
- **Check references.** Use companies that legitimately display the Illinois Movers Association or AMSA's ProMover or Better Business Bureau logo.
- **Avoid Internet brokers.** Avoid entering any contact information, including a phone number, on websites that promise to find qualified movers unless you create a new e-mail address to be used only for the move.

"When selecting a mover for your family and your possessions, buyers beware. There are 1.5 million U.S. searches each month on Google for the term 'movers,' and 3.5 million searches globally," said Maureen Beal, CEO and chairman of National Van Lines and a member of the Board of Directors of the American Moving & Storage Association. "Our research from more than 80 years in business shows that miscommunication, about price, schedule and expectations, is the number one consumer complaint. National Van Lines manages 15,000 interstate moves each year. For best results, consumers should always choose a licensed, insured and professional mover that has a proven track record."

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¹ *Better Business Bureau*

² *Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration*

³ <https://www.protectyourmove.gov/documents/Rights-and-Responsibilities-2013.pdf>

The Illinois Movers' and Warehousemen's Association, the statewide not-for-profit trade association for moving and storage companies licensed to do business in Illinois, was incorporated in 1906. Its members range in size from a one-truck family business to the national headquarters for several national van lines. Licensed household goods movers provide transportation services for more than 250,000 shipments per year -- an average of nearly 700 per day. Movers employ 15,000 people, and own or lease over 13,000 vehicles. Visit www.imawa.com.

About the Chicago and Northern Illinois Better Business Bureau

As a private, non-profit organization, the purpose of the Better Business Bureau is to promote an ethical marketplace. BBBs help resolve buyer/seller complaints by means of conciliation, mediation and arbitration. BBBs also review advertising claims, online business practices and charitable organizations. BBBs develop and issue reports on businesses and nonprofit organizations and encourage people to check out a company or charity before making a purchase or donation.

About Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission is responsible for licensing and enforcing registration and insurance compliance by owners and operators of household goods moving companies, personal property warehouses, motor carriers of property, tow trucks used in relocation and safety towing, repossession activities in the State and inspecting and regulating the general safety of railroad track, facilities and equipment located in Illinois. In addition, the Commission is responsible for ensuring that Illinois residents receive safe, efficient and reliable electric, natural gas and telecommunications services at reasonable prices in a competitive marketplace.

About National Van Lines

National Van Lines is run by a third generation family and is based in Broadview, a Chicago suburb. Its network of 400 agents has been relocating U.S. families for more than 80 years. The company has maintained the highest average customer satisfaction scores with Government Agency relocations for eleven consecutive years. National Van Lines is dedicated to serving its communities. The company was named to the "Tribune's Top Workplaces in Chicago" list the past three years, earned the 2006 Women's Business Enterprise National Council Women-Owned Business Star, ranked in 2012 as the 10th largest certified woman-owned business and for 20 years has partnered with the Wyland Foundation for coastal cleanups and for bringing public art and environmental education to North American families. Visit www.nationalvanlines.com.

About American Moving & Storage Association

The American Moving & Storage Association, home of the ProMover program, is the national trade association representing the nation's moving and storage companies, which provide household goods moving services, specialized transportation for sensitive freight such as computers and trade show exhibits, and warehouse storage services. The association has 4,200 members, including more than 200 international members, and sponsors programs and activities that promote consumer protection, professional development, safety, and operational efficiency.

Contacts:

- Patricia McLaughlin, Illinois Movers' & Warehousemen's Association, 217-585-2470, psmith@imawa.com
- Tom Joyce, Chicago and Northern Illinois Better Business Bureau, 312.245.2643, tjoyce@chicago.bbb.org
- Beth Bosch, Illinois Commerce Commission, 217-782-5793, bbosch@icc.illinois.gov
- Kellee Johnson for National Van Lines, 312-751-3959, kjohnson@ballastgroup.com
- John Bisney, for American Moving & Storage Association, 703-706-4986, jbisney@moving.org