

Right moving company imperative for buyers, sellers

By Shari Berg

SPECIAL TO STATESMAN HOMES

“The three most traumatic things in life are death, divorce and moving,” said Manny Arzamendi, owner of Blue Ribbon Moving Co.. “A mover who understands that is a good mover.”

A good mover is essential for both sellers and buyers.

Although they are jubilant after selling their home, sellers then are faced with the monumental task of packing up their belongings and vacating the property in time for the buyers to move in.

Arzamendi has been a professional mover for 33 years and has the process down to a science. He recommends sellers and buyers who can afford the services of a professional mover consider using one to help streamline the process and make it less stressful.

Most professional movers, including Arzamendi, offer packing, moving and unpacking services for clients.

Planning ahead by organizing and budgeting is the most important step for buyers or sellers who are embarking on the moving process.

“Once a client is able to tell me what their budget is, then I can tell them about the options that fit into their budget,” said Arzamendi. He added that he prefers to do a walk-through with prospective clients to perform an inventory of all of the items that will require packing prior to the move.

“One thing I’ve learned over my 33 years as a mover is that 85 percent of the time, people have more stuff than they estimate needing to move, and then the estimate we provide them for the cost of our services is off,” he said.

Buyers and sellers are encouraged to do their best to properly estimate the amount of items that will be moved in order to avoid last-minute surprises in the cost if they’ve failed to properly estimate.

While most movers will offer a free walk-through before providing an estimate, not every buyer or seller is interested in using the service and would prefer to do a quote over the phone.





Realtors offer tips

There is little doubt that moving can be a challenging experience, even for those who have gone through the process before.

The National Association of Realtors offers several tips for reducing the stress associated with moving, including how to pack to protect your belongings and how to downsize belongings prior to the move.

- ♦ Sorting belongings to decide what you want to keep and what can be donated or disposed of is a crucial first step. To eliminate regrets later, make sure items in the “to be tossed” bin are truly items that are never used.

- ♦ Those who choose to pack up their own belongings should be sure to pack similar items together so they are easier to find during the unpacking process. Choose the right size box for the item being packed and use plenty of packing paper or other padding to help protect breakable items. Do not overpack boxes. Overpacking can result in boxes breaking during the moving process, which can cause damage. It is also best to keep the weight of each box at around 50 pounds.

- ♦ Those who are using a professional moving service should note that most professional movers will not move plants. They will either need to be left behind or moved separately.

- ♦ All important documents should be packed together in one box or file. Back up computer files prior to packing it up.

- ♦ Lastly, if you are planning to use a professional mover, print out a map and directions for them and provide your cellphone number so they can contact you if there are any issues during the moving process.

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“Customers need to be as honest as possible (about the amount of things to be moved) if they request an over-the-phone quote,” said Arzamendi.

Prior to the movers arriving, homebuyers and sellers should take time to decide what they really want to keep with them during the move.

Tammy Templin, a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker in Austin, said she suggests to her clients who are moving - regardless of whether they are buyers moving into a new home or sellers moving out of a home - to get three boxes and label them. The boxes should be labeled donate, consignment and trash.

“Take advantage of the fact that you are moving to get rid of things that have been stored for years and never



used,” said Templin.

Templin said she also recommends using a professional moving service if the client’s budget allows for the expense. Professional movers not only help with packing, moving and unpacking, they also take extra steps to protect the home during the moving-in and moving-out process.

Arzamendi added that

clients who want to pack their own belongings should be aware that the moving company will not guarantee the protection of their items if the client packs them.

“No moving company will warranty boxes packed by the customer,” he said. Clients who pack their own belongings have the option of obtaining high-value insurance to cover

any damage that may occur during the move.

One final tip Arzamendi said he can offer to buyers and sellers is to call early to schedule if they plan to use professional movers. April through September are the busiest moving months of the year, he said, so “the sooner you call, the better the chances of getting a truck.”

Many clients want to move at the end of a month, which also increases demand. Those who are able to arrange for moving services in the middle of the month instead are more likely to get a mover. “You want to get a mover early so you’re not paying extra costs, or overtime, or extra costs for emergency movers,” Arzamendi said.