

MOVING ESTIMATES: Get It In Writing!

Trap

Laura and her family were moving from Lantana to a new home in Jupiter. With only a week before the move, she decided to look for a moving company. She called several and asked for estimates. All but one company offered to evaluate the items to be moved prior to providing a written estimate. That mover gave her a “low ball” estimate by phone of \$999 to move everything. Trying to save a few dollars, Laura selected this company. On moving day, the truck came and removed all her property. Upon arrival at her new home, the movers demanded \$4,000 and threatened to hold her property until she paid in full.

Tips

The Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs Division licenses and regulates companies conducting residential moves in Palm Beach County.

- Movers must prepare a written, signed and approved estimate for the consumer detailing all charges (e.g., boxes, tape, blankets, etc.) associated with the move.
- Prior to the loading the truck, the mover must provide the consumer with a signed contract for service (Bill of Lading) which verifies the complete breakdown of all moving costs.
- A mover must relinquish household goods and place them inside the consumer’s home when payment is made in the amount specified on the contract (Bill of Lading). It is a criminal offense for a moving company to hold goods hostage when the contractual payment is made. Movers must accept two of the following three forms of payment: cash, imprinted personal check or credit card (Visa/MC).
- A mover must also provide a Household Disclosure Form explaining “evaluation” coverage options and the damage claim process prior to a move.

Consumers can check for licensed moving companies and consumer complaints by going to our Web site at: www.pbcgov.com/consumer .

**For more information, call Consumer Affairs
561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 1-888-852-7362 toll free)**