

Here's Some Practical Advice on Avoiding Scams When Hiring a Moving Company

I have never been scammed by a moving company, because I have never used one. The last time I remember seeing a moving company truck at my home was when Mayflower moved my family from Maine to Denver in 1953. As an adult, I always used U-Haul trucks until I bought my first box truck as a Realtor in 2004.

So, I have no personal experience to call upon when it comes to being scammed by movers, but, according to a federal agency, 1 in 10 consumers falls victim to a moving scam. That agency, which is part of the Dept. of Transportation, is the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

"Stop Moving Scams in their Tracks" is just one useful section at [fmcsa.dot.gov/protect-your-move](https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/protect-your-move).

I was reminded of this topic last week as Rita's son and daughter-in-law hired a moving company to move from L.A. to Denver. They described the experience of hiring and working with their movers as nightmarish. Coincidentally, this week I also received and read a blog post on this subject by Anita Clark, a Coldwell Banker agent in Florida.

Arvada's Net Zero Energy Geos Community Challenged

The Geos Community located southwest of Indiana Street and 72nd Avenue in Arvada is a shining example of what's possible in net zero energy home construction.

All Geos homes are solar powered and have no natural gas service. Heating and cooling is provided by ground source or air source heat pumps. Water heaters utilize heat pumps, not gas, and all the homes and townhouses are built according to passive solar design standards.

Two Geos homes were on last fall's Metro Denver Green Homes Tour, and you can view narrated

Much of the following is inspired by (or from) her useful blog post.

The most important thing you can do to protect yourself is to have a written contract that clearly states what the mover will do as part of the terms of the contract. If the contract is vague or does not specifically identify what they are responsible for, you will need to resolve those issues before signing any contract. You do not want to get caught with questionable fees at the end of your move.

As with anything in life, if a mover's quote looks too good to be true, it probably is. Quotes from legitimate companies should be within 10% of each other. If one quote is much lower, you'd be wise to not go with that company because they'll probably get you later with hidden fees, as described below.

Typically, movers ask for a deposit up front and full payment before they open the truck at your new home. That's when they could hit you with those unexpected charges, with urgency and lack of management present working against you.

In her blog post, Anita listed the

video tours of them on our blog, [GoldenREblog.com](https://www.GoldenREblog.com), where I also have information about a developer who bought the remaining land within the Geos Community but is intending to install natural gas service in all the homes they will build.

Naturally, the current residents are quite upset about this turn of events and are hoping to convince the City of Arvada not to allow this diminution of the original intent of Geos to be a strictly net zero energy community.

Visit www.DiscoverGeos.com to appreciate this community's net zero energy mission.

I Have Reserved a Ford F-150 Lightning Electric Pickup

There's a lot to like about Ford's electric version of their popular F-150 pickup truck, and I joined more than 50,000 others who reserved one of them on the first two days it was available for reservations.

I'm a big fan of Teslas — Rita has a Model S and I have a Model X — but I'm no fan of its long anticipated Cybertruck. I like that Ford's

EV has the same styling and functionality of the standard F-150, plus over-the-air software updates (like Tesla), and its battery can power my home in the event of a power failure. You can reserve your own at www.Ford.com. The starting price is under \$40,000, so the cost after federal and state tax credits will be under \$30,000.

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By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

following common hidden fees consumers might encounter:

Gas fees: Gas costs to pick up and deliver items.

Assembly/disassembly: To take apart or put items back together.

Bulk items: Piano, large appliances, outdoor equipment, etc.

Environmental: Typically seen as a disposal fee, such as for moving materials.

Insurance: Moving companies are required to assume liability for the items they are moving.

Packing labor & supplies: This can be costly, so consumers should understand what is included in their contract.

Tolls: You shouldn't pay these.

Weight: A company might give a low quote based on a weight estimate but a new and higher price once they drive to the scale and weigh the truck. Another way these movers overcharge customers is by adding weight (e.g., fuel or passengers) to the truck before weighing it.

Some of the key things you can do to avoid moving scams are:

Online company check: Review their history, reviews, website and BBB rating and interview past clients if possible.

In-person quote: Always ensure that a moving company representative comes to your house so he/she

can prepare an accurate estimate.

Written contracts: If you aren't offered a written contract or the contract does not itemize the services and fees, avoid that moving company.

This is just some of the information and advice which you can find at that FMCSA website mentioned in the second paragraph above. If you are contemplating a move in which you can't use Golden Real Estate's moving truck, moving boxes, packing material and personnel, definitely learn all you can from that website.

A recurring issue my own clients have described when moving out of state is a "delivery window" of 10 or more days written into the contract. The mover may insist (verbally) that the truck they loaded is going directly to your new home, but unless you filled an entire semi trailer, it's quite possible that they will wait to combine your stuff with that of another party moving to the same city or state. This would, of course, entail moving you furniture from one truck to another or into a warehouse, then into another truck.

To avoid this double or triple moving of your stuff, I suggest using a "pod" moving company. You load the pod (container), lock it, and it is delivered to your new home.

Candelas Home Listed by David Dlugasch

This stunning home at 17830 W. 94th Dr. has all the features of a wide open floor plan. The kitchen has stainless steel appliances, a gas range, a huge granite island, beautiful back splash, and lots of light. The dining area leads out through sliding glass doors to a covered deck, perfect for BBQs. The family room has large windows, recessed lighting, and both rooms have hardwood laminate flooring. Also on the main floor is an office/den with new carpet and a half bath. The upper level has the master suite, 5-piece master tiled bath and walk-in closet. Two other bedrooms are carpeted and the third has hardwood laminate flooring. The laundry room is conveniently located on the upper level, as is another bathroom. The basement has 9-foot ceilings and is ready for two more bedrooms and another bathroom that is already plumbed in. Enjoy the Candelas area with two community pools, community centers and gyms. See narrated video tour at www.CandelasHome.info.



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Every element of ad is also posted at [GoldenREblog.com](https://www.GoldenREblog.com)

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