

How to make a move go easier

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Mary-Beth Cooper is bidding farewell to her home of 17 years to take on a new job in Springfield, Mass. But first, she had to gather her family's belongings to prepare for the move.

"Moving is a good time to sort things out," she says.

While Cooper will not be downsizing with this move, she viewed it as an opportunity to go through years of collected stuff—from her son's old school projects to knickknacks. Cooper enlisted the help of a friend to have an impartial person to help decide what to keep and what to part with.

Fall is a busy time of the year for household moving in the Rochester region, says Marabeth Galardi, general manager for Corrigan Moving Systems.

During the fall months, the real estate market remains steady and many people are looking to settle into a new home or apartment before the holiday season, says Galardi, who has 25 years in the relocation business.

If you do decide to move this time of the year, there are some advantages, Galardi says. During this season, companies tend to offer competitive rates as it is no longer the peak summer season, Galardi says.

There are a number of sources those preparing for a move can use to select a moving firm, such as the Better Business Bureau, the local chamber of

commerce or the American Moving and Storage Association.

"When searching for a reputable mover, look for companies that have been in business for a substantial number of years and ask your friends and family for referrals," she says.

It is also important to request a visual, in-home survey and a written estimate on how much the move will cost, Galardi says.

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The cost will be determined by the size and weight of the shipment, so a move is the perfect time to declutter and eliminate your unwanted items. Some larger items may be easier to part with than to take with you, especially if you are moving across state lines.



The Corrigan moving crew loads carefully packed belongings into a moving truck.

If you do not currently use the item, donate it or sell it at a garage sale, Galardi says.

Cooper decided not to move her gas grill, and she also sold the family's John Deere riding mower to a neighbor.

And then there's the emotional side to the move.

Leaving an area that she has lived in since 1989 is bittersweet, says Cooper, who will be taking on a job as the president of Springfield College.

To help keep her sentimental memories, Cooper took many photos of the things she decided to leave behind. Having that independent friend to go through her belongings helped with the organization, Cooper says.

So does knowing she will have photographs to treasure. ■