

Canadian Association of Movers / Association canadienne des déménageurs



Canadian Association of Movers: What Consumers Need to Know About Moving into Storage

The Canadian Association of Movers (CAM) recommends that you visit the storage space before contracting services to ensure the company provides adequate safety and security for your personal property.

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Canadians-on-the-move often need storage to fit their lifestyle choices. Folks should contract with a company that is reputable and that offers physical safety for their stored household effects. Ensuring that your goods are protected in advance is much easier than trying to make a claim afterwards. Here's what you need to know as you search for storage space.

Make sure you completely understand the services that a moving and/or storage company is offering you, your responsibilities, the liability of the company in case of damage to or loss of your goods, the security of the storage space and your ability to access your goods while they are in storage.

Ask about any additional charges. There may be a non-recurring warehouse wrapping and handling charge for: wrapping furniture with felt blankets or other protective materials; mothproofing upholstered items; packing special items like mirrors; and servicing appliances to prevent the growth of mildew. You may also be charged for warehouse handling services, such as palletizing or stacking a shipment; moving within the warehouse; and moving the shipment from within the warehouse to the dock for loading onto a van to leave storage.

Make sure you have a complete list of the articles that are going to be stored. You may have to compare your listing with the warehouse listing to get an explanation of your storage charges. The monthly storage rate is based on either the volume or weight of containers, or a combination of the two. The company may also have a minimum charge for storage. You will pay more for large, bulky items or ones with an unusual size or shape. You will also pay more if you pack your cartons poorly. Consider disposing of some items to ensure your monthly cost remains within your limit.

Always visit the storage facility to see if it is clean, dry and rodent-free. Enquire about climate control. Check out their security system. Do they have fences, monitoring systems and visitor access protocols?

Check to see how property is stored. Sofas and other large upholstered items should be wrapped with protective materials to protect them from dust and damage and stored on sofa racks. Finished furniture should be wrapped to protect against marring, scratching or gouging.

Rugs should be mothproofed, wrapped and placed onto racks. Mattresses, mirrors, pictures and other large, fragile items should also be wrapped. Refrigerators and freezers should be serviced to prevent growth of mildew in them.

You may need to remove some items from storage early, such as winter clothing, a baby carriage or sports equipment. Identify these items at the outset so the warehouse can place them into an easily-accessible spot as the goods are being moved in. If the items are not listed separately, you will likely have to pay for warehouse labour and handling charges for staff to search through the entire shipment and remove them. This can be costly and also increases the chance of a claim.

It is recommended that consumers who place household goods into storage should purchase depository insurance. For full protection, insure your goods to value and, for this protection, you will pay a monthly premium with the storage charges. If the goods are not insured to full value, you will suffer a penalty in the event of a loss. Regardless, the storage company will not accept responsibility for fragile articles, such as lampshades, ornaments, paintings, china, glassware, pictures, books, etc., that you pack yourself. Dangerous goods, perishable items and valuables are not acceptable for storage. The storage company also will not accept responsibility for the mechanical, electrical or electronic functions of pianos, radios, clocks, refrigerators, television and stereo sets, etc. Neither will the company accept responsibility for articles in drawers, trunks, cases, etc., nor for loss or damage from any other cause, unless depository insurance is purchased.

/For further information: Contact the Canadian Association of Movers, Canada's moving industry trade association. CAM helps consumers by identifying good movers and monitoring movers' performance. Consumers should contact CAM at 1-866-860-0065; visit CAM's website, www.mover.net; fax enquiry to 1-866-601-8499; mail to PO Box 30039, RPO New Westminster, Thornhill, ON, Canada L4J 0C6./

For more information, please contact

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