by Steve C. Tyree
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CORPORATE MOVES

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Whether across a corridor or across a continent, corporate moves require specialized, professional planning and services savvy executives look to property management experts to provide.

From real property to physical assets, vehicles, files, records and personnel, such expertise offers protection far less costly than problems even a minor mishap can trigger.

Problems frequently occur in one or more of three broad categories, specifically:

• Insurance and physical protection
• Egress/ingress requirements
• Loading docks

Professional property management establishes contractually binding guidelines for both clients and movers to follow to protect buildings that don't move and property that does. For example, the insured carriers of moving companies write certificates of insurance policies to protect buildings. Reliable property managers have a list of trustworthy, preferred moving vendors.

Making such a list means each such vendor has demonstrated meeting strict liability insurance requirements encompassing general liability, automobile liability, excess umbrella liability (per occurrence and aggregated), worker compensation, employer liability, and cargo-warehouse, among others.

The types, limitations and costs of such insurance are increasing with alarming rapidity. Agents and movers must work together to help format and structure policies to indemnify themselves as part of the process of protecting customers, buildings, and property any move can directly or indirectly affect.

Physically and financially protecting floors and walls against move-related damage is already a basic requirement property managers understand and impose.

So, too, is strategic placing of qualified security personnel, whose watchful eyes add a further dimension of protection for people, places and property.

Earlier this year, a client's office relocation involved temporarily closing a normally moving traffic lane alongside its downtown Houston building. So doing meant not only understanding customer needs, but also compliance with municipal egress regulations governing such procedures.

Again, for their own physical, legal and financial protection, as well as for customers' and the general public's, agents and movers must know such regulations and thoroughly comply with them.

Ignorantly assuming in lieu of compliantly knowing associated regulations and restrictions is tantamount to professional suicide and worse.

As with following the law, it does not pay to skimp on such other measures as proactively protecting interior and exterior features, including expensive or irreplaceable marble and pavers; door jambs; glass door openings and corners; padded threshold protectors; and slippage preventatives at water fountain areas.

Congested loading dock areas are another key focus of concern. Maybe a refuse receptacle obstructs the middle of a dock, hampering loading or unloading, or perhaps other vendors utilize the same space at the same time for providing cleaning crews, foodservice or supplies.

Drivers who cannot see, read or obey height-restriction warnings imperil themselves and others. The prospect of injury and damage – all needless, costly and avoidable – is implicit in instantly turning a truck's solid roof into a top-down convertible.

Avoiding these and other nightmarish scenarios and situations is relatively simple. Planning together, understanding and maintaining common interests, sharpening customer awareness and perception of the varied aspects of a move – all help create a clear, positive understanding of what to expect.

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