

# MOVING IDEAS

## Hints On Keeping Your Cool When Moving Your Home

(NAPSA)—The next time yours is among the estimated one in five U.S. households that move every year, you may care to consider some advice. It's from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, which protects consumers on interstate moves. The agency would like you to know:

- Make sure you're dealing with an authorized household goods mover. See if the company's MC number includes the letters HHG.

- Movers may give binding estimates. It should be in writing and describe all services provided by the mover. Non-binding estimates may not be accurate.

- Never sign a blank document.

- Your mover should give you a copy of the free FMCSA booklet: *Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move*.

- The Bill of Lading is your contract with the mover. Read it carefully and have it available until your shipment is delivered, all charges are paid and any claims settled. Ask your mover any questions you have about it.

- Be sure you understand your mover's settlement program and liability for loss and damage. HHG movers are required to offer shippers arbitration to settle disputes. A civil action can be filed against a mover by serving court documents in any state the mover operates to or through.

- Remember, you have the right to be present each time your shipment is weighed.

- At the time the mover's driver loads your shipment, he or



**When having goods and furniture shipped, read, understand and keep the Bill of Lading, a government agency advises.**

she, although not required to do so, usually inventories the shipment listing any damage or unusual wear. If not, you should, to protect your ability to recover from any loss or damage.

If your interstate move resulted in loss, damage or inconvenience, a claim should be filed with the mover. You have nine months from date of delivery to file your claim, in writing. The mover has 30 days to acknowledge receipt of your claim and must pay, deny or make a settlement offer within 120 days. If the claim cannot be resolved in time, the mover must advise you every 60 days, in writing, of its status. You can register a complaint at the 24-hour hotline: 1-888-DOT-SAFT.

You can learn more from the FMCSA, 400 Virginia Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20024; (202) 358-7028/9 or online at [www.fmcsa.dot.gov](http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov).