

Tips For A Green Move

If you are thinking of emigrating to the other side of the world, the last thing on your mind might be how you can make your move environmentally friendly.

However, more and more people are considering the effect of their move on the environment and looking for ways to make their move more 'green.'

Research shows that shipping and road transportation make up four per cent and 22 per cent respectively of total world carbon emissions (higher than aviation at two per cent)¹. But you don't have to leave a giant carbon footprint, with a few simple considerations you could lessen the impact of your move on the environment and have a greener relocation.

You may contemplate working closely with a recognised green relocations firm for expert advice. Steve Slade, environmental compliance manager at Crown Relocations offers some tips for a green move and how to choose the best relocation company for your needs.

Before you move

If you are looking to move in the near future, try to stop accumulating household items, why not hold a garage sale, sell your unnecessary items online at eBay or consider putting them into storage if you think you might return to the UK. Only moving what you really need is better for the environment.

When choosing a relocation company to assist with your move, don't forget to check their green credentials and hire one that has environmentally friendly attributes.

Planning the move

Try and keep correspondence connected to the move to email rather than by hard copy wherever possible.

Choose a relocation company that has a fleet management programme in place to manage vehicle emissions. Some companies even put their drivers through advanced driver training to encourage better driving skills, which result in less use of fuel.

Things to consider when choosing a relocation company

Some relocation companies include consideration to the environment as an integral part of their core business values. You could look for a company that has Environment Accreditation ISO1400 - a standard recognised worldwide and awarded to organisations who demonstrate awareness and reduction of any activities that impact on our environment - or one that has a clear environmental policy, demonstrating their commitment to reducing their carbon footprint without compromising standards and quality.

Choose a company that uses cartons and packaging materials, which contain the maximum amount of recycled content without conceding on the quality and strength of protection it offers. The company should also have the facility to recycle waste packaging from moves and a policy on minimising the use of oil based products (such as bubble wrap) when a paper based alternative is available and as effective.

Steve Slade puts it into perspective, he says: “As well as putting various initiatives into place to help our customers make their relocation more environmentally-friendly, we also encourage our staff to be as green as they can. Crown Relocations has evidence of its recycling volumes and shows an improvement in volumes year on year. We also actively measure natural resource consumption and make efforts to reduce it, plus we have introduced a ‘plant a tree’ scheme to in an attempt to offset our carbon emissions, which is a great way of giving something back to the environment.”

What can you do to make your move greener?

Use original packaging materials for electrical items if possible

Don't transport electrical items which can not be used at your new destination due to power changes or voltage - donate / sell or give these away before moving.

Consider where you are moving to; with this in mind be selective about what items you need to take. For example, often the cost of converting cars and motor vehicles to be compliant with your destination country's emission requirements can make it impractical and it may be better to sell it before you go and buy one at destination.

Take the sea freight option rather than air freight but make sure it's a direct sailing and not routed half way around the world!

After the move

Check that your relocation company will unpack your items at your new destination and take the packing materials away to be recycled.

If you do have any packing materials left over after unpacking you could reuse them to make something for the children to play in, such as a den, castle or car.

Email friends and family 'we've moved' cards instead of buying cards and posting them.

These simple, but effective, steps will go a long way to making your move greener. This will not only benefit the environment but will also help to keep the cost of your move down, as you won't be moving items that you don't need.

You can also measure your carbon footprint on line at:

www.carbonfootprint.com and offset the impact of your move via a tree planting scheme such as Plant A Tree Today www.plant-a-tree-today.org

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1. <http://www.relocatemagazine.com/index.php/removals-a-storage/421-leaner-and-greener>

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