

Moving with your Pet

Moving is one of the most stressful events for people and their pets. There are certain precautions you can take to make everything go more smoothly.

If you are selling your house it is important to make sure that your animals do not escape when a realtor shows your house. Some people try putting up signs to warn of animals in the house and to not let them out but there are still too many stories of animals escaping. It is best to not let your house be shown without you present. If this is not possible, then you may require prior notice of a showing and then confine the animals to an area. Ask the realtor to show that are last and then leave that door open when they are done. This will reduce the risk of losing your pets. One client had her cat get into the attic during a showing only to discover when she got home that her cat was inside the downstairs walls.

When packing for a move it is best not to have your pets around. Moves are especially stressful for cats. It can get very noisy and is extremely disruptive. Cats tend to find remote hiding spots or escape through an open door - this serves only to heighten your own stress! One client related the story of their cat hiding in a dresser drawer. They did not discover the cat was missing until all the furniture had been loaded and the truck was gone. The furniture was in storage for three weeks and only when unloaded did they discover the cat! It was alive but starving and dehydrated. Some people try to confine their pets to a room but sometime the movers do not pay attention to signs on doors and will inadvertently let them out. The best thing for all is to board your animals for the day. Then you know they are safe and can concentrate on your move.

There are certain things you should do to your new home prior to moving your animals in. If the carpet is not new you should have it cleaned to remove any old pet odors. Regardless if the house is new, you should have the house treated for fleas - construction workers will bring their dogs on the site, possibly infesting the house with fleas. If there is any construction to be done to the house, it is best to have it done prior to moving in.

Transporting your pets is usually always stressful to them and you. If you are moving a long distance it is best to drive them. Flying can be dangerous for animals unless they are in the cabin. If you choose to fly them in the cabin, call in advance. Some airlines have restrictions on the number of animals and the type of carriers. Most usually require health certificates. Some owners automatically think their pets should be tranquilized for travel. This depends on the type of transportation, the personality of your pet and its health. Tranquilizers can have side effects so check with your veterinarian. If you drive with your pets - keep them in a carrier or on a leash (dog)! There would be nothing more horrible than your pet escaping out the door when you get in and out or having an accident due to an animal interfering with your driving.

Before introducing them into their new home, have their litterbox, bowls, scratching posts and condos set up. Providing familiarity helps cut down the disorientation. If your new home is large, introduce them to a smaller area first. This allows you to "cat proof" your new home before turning them loose.