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## **A Smart Move: Cost-Saving Tips for Downsizing Seniors**

*Moving Experts and Senior Move Managers Susie and Joel Danick Offer Simple Tips to Benefit Seniors Planning a Summer Move*

**Gaithersburg, MD** (May 22, 2007)—Summer is just around the corner, which means moving season is in full swing. But for many seniors who plan to downsize this year, the logistics of planning a move can often become more overwhelming than the decision to downsize. And for those doing it alone—without the help of family and friends—one set of moving experts worries that without the right planning and research, seniors will find themselves caught in a very costly and stressful situation.

“It’s hard enough for an individual, a young couple or a family to work out the logistics of a major home move,” notes Susan Danick, founder of Transitional Assistance & Design, a senior move management company in the Washington DC area. “But for seniors who most often need to rely on outside parties to help with the process, the cost and stress of such a situation can multiply quickly.”

As senior move managers, Susie and her husband/business partner Joel Danick, are focused on making sure their audience—mostly seniors downsizing into a new home—take the necessary precautions to protect themselves against movers looking to take advantage of the elderly.

“Moving is stressful enough. We want to remove as much anxiety from the equation as possible, while still affording them the ability to control the major decisions along the way,” added Susie.

When it comes to moving, the team recommends a few important cost-saving measures:

1. **Choose a Mover That Fits Your Needs.** Are you moving precious artwork or antique furniture? “It is so important to find a mover with the right qualifications for your exact situation,” notes Joel Danick. “For a move involving many large and delicate items, make sure the moving company includes packing and crating in their estimate, along with insurance.
2. **Move During Off-Peak Days/Times.** The busiest times to move are right now—between May and September—as well as during the beginning and end of each month. If possible, hold your move until mid-month, or anytime between October and April to secure much lower rates. Outside of traditional off-peak times, moving rates are also more competitive when the housing market slows down. “Many people are finding room to negotiate rates with their mover right now, in a traditionally peak time, because the housing market has cooled slightly,” says Susie Danick.
3. **Request Written Estimates from Several Movers.** Any moving estimate should be based on an actual inspection of your home furnishings, not a phone conversation. When comparing estimates, make sure each mover has allocated the same number of movers, and the same number of hours, to achieve a true comparison. And while an estimate is never a final fee, protect yourself from getting a harsh surprise post-move by making sure the mover is familiar with the new residence. “The moving company should understand, for example, the number of steps into the new house, or the distance between the loading dock and the front door,” says Susie.
4. **De-clutter Before the Move for Significant Savings.** Despite common belief, packing does NOT lead to significant savings, especially for homeowners who have lived in the same house for over 30 years. “It’s the sorting that saves you money,” says Joel Danick. “Remember, the more items you discard before the move, the less your moving bill will be.”

5. **Choose Best Quality over Best Price.** If you hire a mover based solely on the cheapest price, you may be sacrificing other things that are actually more important, such as getting your possessions moved and delivered on time, and delivered all in one piece.
6. **Protection is Key.** It is important to make sure your property is handled well. Any reputable mover is going to cover or crate items before they are loaded. Regardless of the mover, keep your most precious items with you, and off the truck, such as prescription medications, jewelry and important financial documents.
7. **Read the Fine Print Before Signing on the Dotted Line.** Unfortunately, some movers will tack on hidden fees such as the cost of packing supplies or boxes in the fine print. Make sure you have a complete understanding of all fees before you agree.
8. **Base the Move on a Floor Plan of Your New Space.** According to Transitional Assistance & Design, the floor plan, or layout of furniture in the new home, is a roadmap for the entire move. As most movers charge by the hour, this “map”, usually designed by a senior move manager, can save seniors significant money because it details where each piece of furniture belongs in the new space. Movers can work much more efficiently using a floor plan, with the added assurance that each piece of furniture will fit in the new space.
9. **Do a Background Check.** Make sure your mover has insurance and a mover’s license by checking out the Better Business Bureau. Additional resources include: The American Moving and Storage Association and [www.ProtectYourMove.gov](http://www.ProtectYourMove.gov), run through the federal motor carrier safety administration. And never discount the power of a good referral. Ask friends of family members for the names of movers that they’ve used in the past.
10. **Don’t Attempt the Move in Just One Day.** Many movers may suggest you move within one day, especially if the new and old homes are in close proximity. The cost savings is minimal and the process makes for an extremely long day. Choose a mover who will help with the pack/load on day one, and the unpack/unload on day two. Any reputable mover will guarantee that your valuables will be locked in a safe and secure location overnight.

Susie Danick, a Registered Nurse by trade, founded *Transitional Assistance & Design* in 2000, after moving her grandmother into an assisted living facility. She and her husband/business partner work with clients to first develop a floor plan of their new living space. They then help to select which furniture will come along and which will be sold or donated to charity, arranges the moving company, transfers all utilities, and oversees the pack and unpack process. Susie and her team pay special attention to how each resident’s home was decorated before the move, including how books were displayed on bookshelves, which family photo was propped up next to the computer and how food was arranged in the refrigerator. They then recreate the setup in the newer, smaller space, making their clients feel at home the moment they walk in the door.

“There are so many details that go into a move of this magnitude - not to mention the emotional impact,” noted Susie. “Seniors can really plan for their move—and protect themselves in the process—with just some simple research and planning.”

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*Transitional Assistance & Design, LLC* specializes in downsizing, moving and decorating services for aging adults. Founded in 2000 by Susie Danick, a Registered Nurse by trade, the company offers a variety of services to help make the otherwise overwhelming and traumatic experience of downsizing go as smoothly as possible. *Transitional Assistance & Design* is a member of the National Association of Senior Move Managers (NASMM). Susie is also a member of the association’s Board of Directors. To learn more, visit [www.helpseniorsmove.com](http://www.helpseniorsmove.com)