

Time your move right to save money

By Metro Creative Connection

Buying a new home is the most expensive purchase a person is likely to make in his or her lifetime. It also can be one of the more stressful. The Employee Relocation Council states that moving is the third most stressful event in life, following death and divorce. But a well-timed move can reduce stress and save money.

Moving during certain times of the year can result in considerable savings. Moving during the summer, when children are out of school and the weather is nice, can make a move more manageable. Keep in mind that because late spring and summer are the peak moving seasons, they also tend to be more expensive. Many moving companies and truck rental agencies will charge a premium if you use their services during the summer. Furthermore, crews may change in the summer when students on vacation could fill in for regular, more experienced movers.

High prices are not only reserved for those who buy a new house during the spring and summer. Renters may find spring and summer is also the peak season for rentals. Many apartment managers can attest that the dates between June 2 and August 30 are quite busy in terms of apartment turnover. College students are more likely to move as soon as the academic year ends, and many landlords plan leases to expire in the summer months to ensure that re-renting places will be easier thanks to a flooded apartment market. According to Apartment Wiz, a Houston-based apartment locating service, although there might be greater apartment availability during the warm-weather months, it also means greater competition between prospective tenants. That greater competition can drive up prices.

But apartments are harder to fill in the fall or at the onset of winter. That's because many people do not want the hassle of moving once school has started or the weather has chilled. Landlords who are stuck paying utilities and advertising fees for vacant apartments are far more likely to negotiate rent prices, lease terms and even security deposits during the winter in an effort to fill the apartment quickly.

People sitting with homes on the market are also more likely to negotiate during cooler months when foot traffic has fizzled out. That can make shopping for a home in the fall advantageous to home buyers.

Here are some other tips to reduce stress and save money when moving into a new home or apartment.

- * Move mid-week. Weekends are a prime time for truck rentals and moving companies. Pick a Tuesday or a Wednesday to move, and you're much more likely to find an available moving service (even during peak moving months); you may even be able to negotiate a lower rate.

- * Pick a mid-month moving date. Many people move at the beginning of the month when leases are up or after mortgage payments are made. Fewer people move in the middle of the month, so you might find more affordable moving deals if you can wait a few extra weeks.

- * Schedule a fall or winter move.

