

“MOVING TO CANADA? EXPERIENCED REMOVALS EXPERT SHARES 9 TOP TIPS”



Award winning International removals specialist, Gary Burke, explains how to make sure your life changing move to Canada goes as smoothly as possible.

As moving home is widely regarded as one of the most stressful life experiences, behind bereavement and divorce, moving to Canada can push that boundary to the limits. However, there is a way to ensure all your frustration and anxiety melts away so your move goes as smoothly and stress-free as possible. Here's some sound practical advice and guidance from an award winning removals specialist who's been there and done it - 100's of times in fact!

So, what do you need to consider before moving home to Canada?

1. CLEAR THE DECKS:

Making that move to Canada can be the one big final push, or rather opportunity, you'll get to have the kind of clear out you've always promised yourself for years, but never got around to. You can finally sort out all the stuff in the garage, up the loft, in the shed, and in all those draws and cupboards, as moving to the other side of the Atlantic definitely gives you a renewed sense of clarity and focus on what's truly important to you.

2. PLANNING:

Early planning and preparation will help you to make the right decision regards picking an International moving company, plus make sure both you and the movers are organised. Firstly, get quotations and information from several

companies 3 to 4 months before you plan to move. How do you select moving companies? Recommendation is a key starting point. If not, then look for those who are members of FIDI (the largest global alliance of independent quality international removal companies) and also members of the British Association of Removers. You may prefer to contact local members to you, but don't be put off by international movers from further afield as locality is not so important when choosing an overseas specialist mover. It's more important that they have the right experience and knowledge of overseas moving to Canada.

Once you have selected a few companies, invite them to give you a quotation for your move. This normally

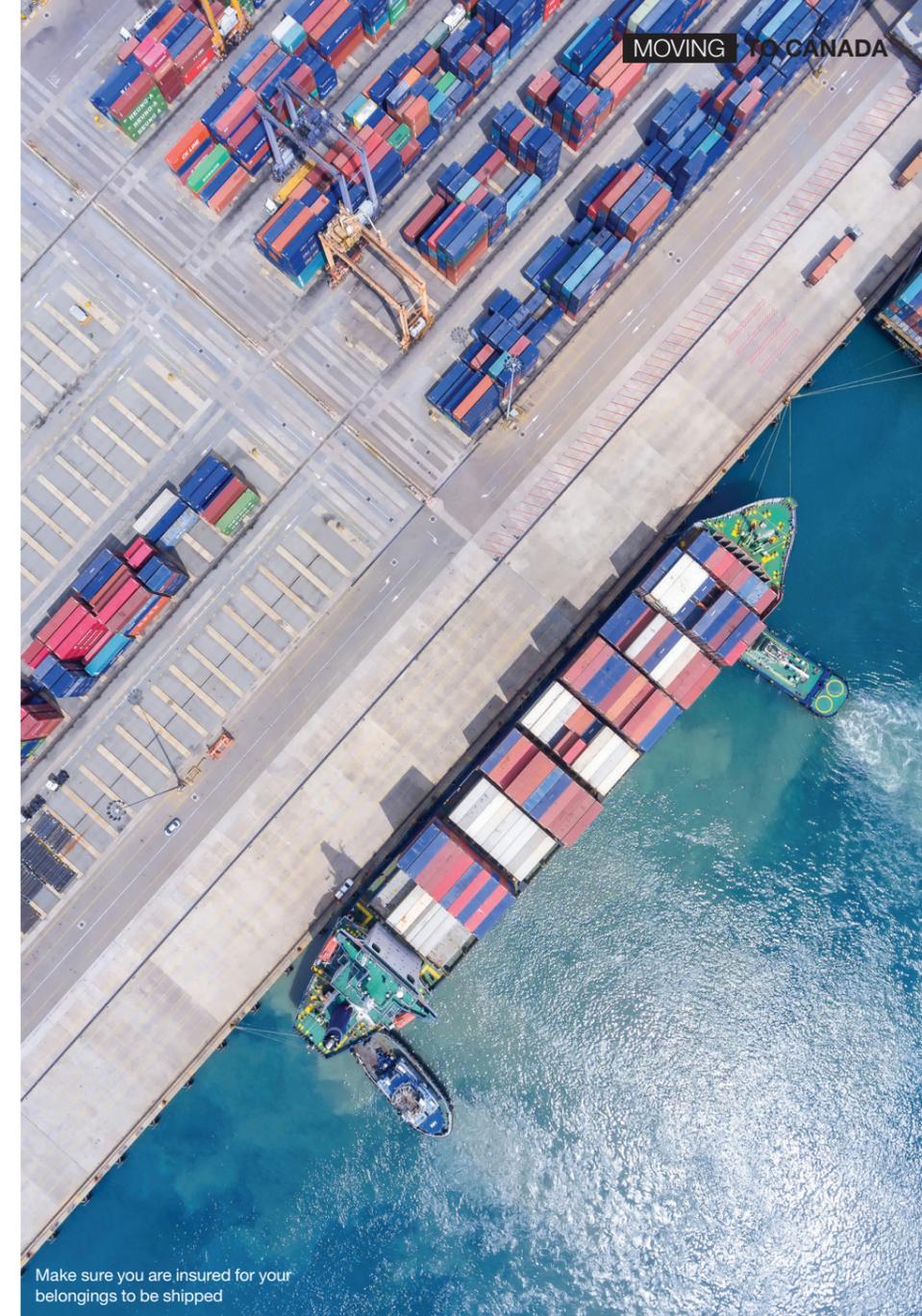
involves arranging for an Estimator to visit you in your home, in order to calculate volumes and packing requirements. Calculating the correct volumes is the key factor. Even more importantly, though, an experienced Estimator can give you some invaluable advice and guidance on what's required, in preparation for the move, so use these initial meetings wisely.

3. CHILDREN:

No matter how excited or confident you are about moving to Canada, you will always have doubts in your mind as to whether you are doing the right thing. This is only natural, but even more so if you have younger or school age children. You'll probably be worried about how they'll react to moving such a long way overseas. Talk to them early about the prospect of moving to a new place far, far away. Give them credit and get them involved, taking their views, fears and concerns into consideration. Children are far more adaptable than adults and usually settle in to new schools and make new friends much faster than adults do. Involve them in the planning and discussions as much as possible. At first, particularly the older children, worry about leaving their friends and family behind, so make sure they compile lists of addresses, phone numbers, emails, and skype addresses, so they can keep in touch with family and friends. Also, get them to sort out what they would like to take. If they want to take more than you would like, then consider it. It may help them to feel more at home in Canada, if they have their familiar things around them. Plus it could be cheaper to ship certain items than to start replacing them, in the long run.

4. PETS:

Although moving to Canada has always been a life-long hope for you and your family, you're now worried whether a certain family member, your pet, can join you. The good news is, domestic dogs and cats are permitted to enter Canada from the UK, as there is no official quarantine for them because the UK is recognised, by the Canadian authorities, as a rabies free country. Dogs and cats do not require a microchip or tattoo identification either. Cats do not require a health certificate or import permit. They do require a rabies vaccination, but that can be done literally



Make sure you are insured for your belongings to be shipped

just before you fly out, as there is no waiting time between the date of vaccinate and entering Canada. Airlines require assurance that your pet is healthy enough to fly. Therefore your pet must be inspected by a vet shortly prior to the flight (usually within a few days, for BA and Air Canada up to 10 days before the flight). The vet must then issue a fitness to fly (or private health) certificate or sign, date and stamp the relevant clinical examination section of the pet passport. Alternatively the DEFRA Export Health Certificate will cover this requirement. Obviously, we always recommend you double check this with the Canadian authorities before you proceed. Pets must travel in an airline approved travelling crate that meets I.A.T.A. standards to

ensure they cannot escape or be injured whilst travelling.

5. PACKING:

The most important thing is to know that your belongings are packed safely and ready to be moved, and that they arrive in Canada in the same condition they left the UK in. All international movers should have overseas trained packers to make sure the standard of packing is the same throughout. All fragile items are wrapped in individual recycled paper or bubble wrap. Export strength cartons are used and cases are sometimes made for certain items. Special linen cartons and book cartons are used as well as hanging garment boxes, if preferred. Other considerations are tailor made crates for >>

pianos, clocks, glass cabinets, as well as specially constructed frames/crates for shipping scooters and motorbikes.

6. SHIPPING CONTAINERS:

As you're shipping your personal effects to Canada, you'll either need your own 20 or 40 feet overseas shipping container, or you can reduce your costs by sharing a container with someone else who's shipping there items to the same Canadian port, where you only pay for the space your personal possessions and belongings use within the container, otherwise known as a part load or groupage service. Part loads can sometimes be useful if you want to split your possessions, shipping your higher priority, and more immediately-needed, items first, then shipping your less pressing items, things you don't need so urgently, at a later date.

Your removals company will usually arrive to pack and wrap all the items ready for shipment, along with any items which need to be carefully allocated to go into storage. All the packed boxes and wrapped furniture will be ready for the day the container arrives and they will be carefully loaded over a period of about three hours. The inventory will be checked, ready for the container to be locked and sealed and driven away on its journey to the UK port.

7. QUARANTINE, CUSTOMS AND EXCISE:

With their strictly enforced quarantine clearance procedures you need the advice and guidance of export packing experts in the UK to ensure you comply with all the Canadian regulations. It will save you a great deal of heartache if you make the correct preparation in the UK rather than when you reach your Canadian overseas destination.

8. INSURANCE:

Make sure your moving company offers marine insurance. Customers should be aware that products such as extended or standard liability are not insurance and can leave you disadvantaged. Do remember to explicitly ask the moving company; "Do your staff undertake in house and external training courses to ensure they're professionally trained?" Check to see if they are members of the British Association of Removers and FIDI. With all this said, and just in case



things do go wrong, it is still highly advisable that you take out sufficient insurance cover for your entire move. Make sure you are covered for both your goods, as well as the cost of the shipment itself, if required. A comprehensive door to door cover is best.

9. PAYMENTS:

Moving to Canada with a member of the BAR offers you financial security on your advance payment, as all moves have to be paid for prior to you leaving the UK. This is standard practice. You then obviously assume the removal company, having taken your money, will carry out your removal services. This can be a potential risk for customers, however, all members of the BAR provide a financial guarantee through a bond, giving all customers peace of mind, secure in the knowledge that even if a problem arose, like your removal company ceasing to trade, your payment is protected through the financial guarantee, allowing your goods to be delivered door to door. In recent years, many examples of financially insecure moving companies have accepted payment for international moves, but have been unable to fulfil their obligations. When this has happened customers have not only had to pay again, but also re-organise the whole moving process through another removals company, sometimes having to do this from

Canada. This is why it is so important to be protected by BAR giving you a cast-iron guarantee that its members' protect the public, even if the worst should happen.

Finally, once you have talked to your shortlist of moving companies and have read through their quotations, you'll be ready to make your choice. You may simply choose on cost or may prefer to go with the company you feel most comfortable with. Don't always assume you are comparing apples with apples. Look at the finer details of the quotation and the quality, professionalism and Canadian experience of your chosen moving company.

Before moving day, make sure you get in touch with the movers to re-confirm all the details of your move. Then all you've got to do is sit back and wait for

the big day to arrive. ★

■ **Gary Burke is Managing Director of Burke Bros Moving Group, which has successfully moved hundreds of families to, and from, Canada over the past 36 years. If you are considering starting a new life in Canada and would like to find out more about what's involved in moving your household possessions overseas, visit the Burke Bros website at www.burkebros.co.uk.**