SAFE SHIP
MOVING SERVICES

What movers can't take, and what to do instead

A packing checklist for interstate moves. Print it, work through it before you seal a single box, and keep it with your moving paperwork.

TWO DIFFERENT RULES

Some items are restricted by federal hazardous-materials requirements. Others are refused by the individual carrier under its own policy, which can be stricter than the federal rules.

WHAT THAT MEANS FOR YOU

The list below separates the two. When an item falls under carrier policy, the answer is a phone call, not a guess. Ask the carrier handling your shipment before moving day.

01 Do not pack

Federally regulated hazardous materials. Do not place these in household-goods boxes or luggage.

Flammable liquids and fuels

Ignitable, and a fire risk in a sealed trailer.

- [ ] Gasoline and fuel cans
- [ ] Kerosene
- [ ] Lighter fluid
- [ ] Paint thinner
- [ ] Solvents
- [ ] Automotive chemicals
- [ ] Fuel left in mowers and outdoor equipment

Compressed gases

Pressurized, and a hazard even when they read as empty.

- [ ] Propane cylinders from the grill
- [ ] Oxygen bottles
- [ ] Charged SCUBA tanks
- [ ] Other pressurized containers

Do not assume an empty cylinder is acceptable. Check with the carrier.

Paint, solvents, and household chemicals

Can catch fire, react, or leak and damage everything around them.

- [ ] Paint and varnish
- [ ] Paint thinner and finishes
- [ ] Bleach and household cleaners
- [ ] Drain cleaners
- [ ] Pool chemicals
- [ ] Pesticides and herbicides

Fireworks and explosives

Easy to forget in a garage or a storage closet.

- [ ] Fireworks of any kind
- [ ] Gunpowder
- [ ] Other explosive materials

Check your state and local rules for lawful disposal.

> **Start here, not at the end.** Walk the garage, the cleaning cabinet, the shed, and under the sinks before you pack anything else. Hazardous items found on moving day are the single most common reason a load gets delayed.

Five questions worth asking before moving day

- [ ] Do you have a written non-allowables list I can see?
- [ ] How do you want fuel-powered equipment prepared?
- [ ] Do you accept firearms, ammunition, or plants, and under what conditions?
- [ ] What happens on the day if something on the list turns up in a box?
- [ ] What protection applies to the items you are transporting?

02 Ask your carrier first

Not automatically prohibited. Whether these travel depends on the carrier's own policy and, in some cases, on other rules.

Firearms and ammunition

A carrier may refuse either or both. Ammunition can also fall under hazardous-materials requirements.

- ☐ Confirm in writing whether the carrier accepts firearms
- ☐ Ask separately about ammunition
- ☐ Review federal, state, and local requirements
- ☐ Where permitted, consider keeping them with you

Plants

Soil, pests, and agricultural rules can all apply, and a trailer is a hard place to survive.

- ☐ Ask whether the carrier accepts plants at all
- ☐ Check agricultural rules for your destination state
- ☐ Plan to gift or rehome anything that cannot travel

Perishable and frozen food

Often refused because it spoils, leaks, smells, or attracts pests in transit.

- ☐ Fresh fruit and vegetables
- ☐ Refrigerated and frozen food
- ☐ Dairy and meat
- ☐ Open containers and part-used pantry goods

Run the freezer down in the weeks before the move rather than packing it.

Keep with you

Not prohibited. Simply too important to hand over.

- ☐ Cash, cards, and keys
- ☐ Passports and identification
- ☐ Birth certificates and car titles
- ☐ Financial and medical records
- ☐ Contracts and moving paperwork
- ☐ Jewelry and heirlooms
- ☐ Small high-value electronics
- ☐ Irreplaceable photographs

03 Where it goes instead

Never pour chemicals down a drain or put them in household trash. Check your local waste-management requirements first.

ITEM	WHERE IT GOES
Fuels and flammable liquids	Household hazardous waste drop-off. Run equipment dry rather than draining it into a container.
Propane cylinders	Exchange or return at a retailer that refills them, or a hazardous waste facility.
Paint and chemicals	Local household hazardous waste program. Some areas run collection days.
Fireworks	State and local rules apply. Contact your fire department or waste authority.
Food	Eat it down, then donate unopened non-perishables to a local food bank.
Plants	Gift to neighbors, or check destination agricultural rules before moving them yourself.

Planning an interstate move?

Safe Ship Moving Services is a licensed moving broker. We build the move plan, match you with a vetted licensed and insured motor carrier, and stay on your side of it. Visit safeshipmoving.com to get started with a moving estimate.

This checklist is a planning aid, not legal advice. Requirements vary by carrier, state, and locality, and can change. Confirm every item with the carrier handling your shipment before moving day.
Sources: FMCSA, Protect Your Move. U.S. EPA, Household Hazardous Waste.