

Investigation Report

Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC

TV-143601

Susie Paul Compliance Investigations

October 2014

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

Purpose

Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC (Adam's Moving) holds a permit issued by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to transport household goods within the state of Washington. The purpose of this investigation is to determine the company's compliance with Washington state laws and commission rules.

Scope

The scope of this investigation focuses on the intrastate transportation of household goods in Washington by Adam's Moving from June 1, 2013, through Aug. 31, 2013, and the company's compliance with state laws and commission rules during that period.

Authority

Staff undertakes this investigation pursuant to Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 80.04.070, RCW 81.80.130, and RCW 81.80.330. Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-15-010 describes the commission's authority to regulate companies that transport household goods within the state of Washington.

Staff

Susie Paul, Compliance Investigator (360) 664-1105 spaul@utc.wa.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This investigation was prompted by an anonymous complaint submitted to Compliance Investigations staff on Sept. 18, 2013. The complaint contained allegations that Adam's Moving, a permitted household goods carrier, was violating numerous commission rules. Accordingly, staff concluded that a broader investigation was necessary to determine whether Adam's Moving consistently complies with laws and rules enforced by the commission.

An investigation into the business practices of Adam's Moving found that the company is in violation of commission rules and Household Goods Tariff 15-C, as follows:

- Failure to provide customers with a copy of the commission's consumer guide titled, "Moving in Washington State," in violation of WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C.
- Failure to provide written estimates to customers in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Failure to use a properly formatted estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Incorrectly charging customers for travel time to the point of origin when an estimate was not provided or was done on the same day as the move, in violation of WAC 480-15-630(8).
- Failure to provide a table of measurements (cube sheet) in conjunction with the estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Failure to use a properly formatted bill of lading in violation of WAC 480-15-710(3) and Tariff 15-C, Item 95.
- Failure to follow the terms, conditions, and rates imposed by Tariff 15-C in violation of WAC 480-15-490(3).
- Engaging in advertising that is misleading or deceptive in violation of WAC 480-15-610(2).
- Failure to use permit name as shown on the company's household goods permit in violation of WAC 480-15-390(1).

Recommendation

Staff recommends the commission issue a formal complaint and assess a total penalty of up to \$14,000 for the following violations:

- Up to \$1,000 for 55 violations of failing to provide customers with a copy of *Moving in Washington State*, in violation of WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to \$1,000 for 21 violations of failing to provide written estimates in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to \$1,000 for 34 violations of failing to use a properly formatted estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85. This is a repeat violation.

¹ Copy of the anonymous complaint against Adam's Moving is attached as Appendix A.

- Up to \$1,000 for 55 violations of failing to provide a cube sheet in conjunction with customer estimates in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85. This is a repeat violation.
- Up to \$1,000 for 389 violations found within 55 improperly formatted bill of lading in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C. This is a repeat violation.
- Up to \$1,000 for one violation of failing to charge customers correct terms, conditions, and rates imposed by Tariff 15-C in violation of WAC 480-15-490(3), by charging customers an incorrect minimum hour fee. This is a repeat violation.
- Up to \$500 for each of the 14 violations of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C for charging a separate line item (credit card fee) that is not authorized by the tariff, for a total potential penalty of \$7,000. This is a repeat violation.
- Up to \$1,000 for 10 advertising violations of WAC 480-15-610(1)(2) and Tariff 15-C. This is a repeat violation.

Staff also recommends that Adam's Moving issue refunds to all customers improperly charged a credit card fee in the two-year period preceding the date the formal complaint was filed. Finally, staff recommends that Adam's Moving carefully review this report because it contains valuable technical assistance for the following violations:

- Violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 230, for charging customers travel time when an estimate was not provided, or was provided on the day of the move.
- Violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 230, for failing to charge customers the required four hour minimum charge for weekend moves.
- Violations of RCW 81.80.305 for failing to mark commercial vehicles as required.

A discussion of staff's recommendations appears at the end of this report.

BACKGROUND

Company Information

Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC, (Adam's Moving) is a limited liability corporation located at 17355 First Avenue NW, Shoreline, WA 98177. Adam French is the owner. Mr. French indicated on the company's permit application that he was responsible for company operations and compliance.

Mr. French was operating his household goods moving company without a required permit when staff discovered his company and first contacted him in 2005. Adam's Moving was granted provisional household goods operating authority on Oct. 24, 2005. On Aug. 7, 2006, permanent authority HG-62045 was granted in Docket No. TV-051583.

Mr. French stores his vehicles at a parking lot at 135th and Aurora in Seattle, and reported he currently has four vehicles: one 20-foot truck and three 24-foot trucks, with a fifth truck out of service. Mr. French stated he will be leasing new vehicles in the near future.

The following is reported revenue for Adam's Moving for the past three years:

Reporting Year	Date Filed	Revenue
2013	May 29, 2014	\$886,383.28
2012	May 1, 2013	\$902,726.00
2011	April 30, 2012	\$671,029.00

Adam's Moving did not timely file the company's 2013 annual report and on June 4, 2014, was assessed a \$1,000 penalty in Docket TV-140935. On June 11, 2014, the commission received a request from Mr. French for mitigation of the penalty. On July 11, 2014, Order 01 was issued granting mitigation to \$200. The statement of account notes payment of \$200 was made on July 21, 2014.

On June 25, 2014, Adam's Moving permit was suspended under Order 01, Docket TV-141326 for failure to file proof of liability and property damage insurance covering equipment. Order 02, lifting the suspension was issued on July 15, 2014.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

2010 Staff Investigation

In 2010, staff opened an investigation after reviewing Adam's Moving website, www.adamsmovingservice.com, and found the following violations:

No. of Violations	WAC / Tariff	Description
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 230	Incorrectly advertising a two-hour minimum rate
1	Tariff 15-C	Advertising an unauthorized fee for "fuel surcharge"
1	WAC 480-15-610	Failure to display the company's commission-issued permit number on its website

On March 17, 2010, Mr. French was issued a technical assistance letter for the above violations and was notified that future violations identified by commission staff of the rules or tariff items addressed would be subject to enforcement actions, which could include financial penalties.² In addition to the technical assistance, Mr. French was encouraged to attend a commission-sponsored household goods training seminar. Mr. French was provided with contact information to register for the training, including the date and time. Mr. French did not attend the household goods training seminar.

2011 (May) Staff Investigation – Case Record 11761

In 2011, staff conducted an investigation into the business practices of Adam's Moving, prompted by a complaint made to the commission alleging that Adam's Moving was advertising services that conflicted with the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) and Tariff 15-C.

On May 16, 2011, staff concluded its investigation and provided Mr. French technical assistance, citing the following violations:

No. of Violations	WAC / Tariff	Description
1	WAC 480-15-490(3)	Advertising valuation terms in conflict with Tariff 15-C
1	WAC 480-15-610(1)	Failure to include commission-issued permit number on website
1	WAC 480-15-610(6)	Advertising services and rates in conflict with Tariff 15-C

Mr. French was advised to comply with commission rules and Tariff 15-C to avoid future enforcement action.³

2011 (November) Staff Investigation – Case Record 11938

In 2011, staff again opened an investigation after reviewing the Adam's Moving website and finding that the company was advertising a three percent convenience charge for all customer credit card charges. Tariff 15-C does not contain a provision authorizing a credit card convenience charge.

² Copy of March 17, 2010 technical assistance letter is attached as Appendix B.

³ Copy of May 16, 2011 technical assistance letter is attached as Appendix C.

On Nov. 4, 2011, Adam's Moving was provided technical assistance by email notifying Mr. French that charging customers a three percent credit card charge violates Tariff 15-C.⁴

2012 (February) Staff Investigation – Case Record 11989

In February 2012, staff reviewed the Adam's Moving website and found it contained the following statement: "payment is due at the time of completion. We are unable to send a bill for payment at a later date. No exceptions." Mr. French was given technical assistance by email on Feb. 7, 2012, which instructed him to update the company website to include correct payment information and confirm that the correction had been made no later than Feb. 17, 2012. Case tracking notes indicate that the website was corrected by removing the payment information not authorized by Tariff 15-C on Mar. 1, 2012.

2012 (March) Consumer Complaint No. 113036

Consumer complaint no. 113036 was opened in Feb. 2012, after customers of Adam's Moving contacted Consumer Protection to report damage to their property during a Dec. 9, 2011, move. The customers contacted Mr. French with a damage estimate of \$2,300. Mr. French acknowledged the damage and said he would contact them at a later time. The customers did not hear back from Mr. French, despite leaving three messages requesting a call back.

As a result of the investigation, Mr. French was strongly urged to attend household goods training at the commission and received technical assistance on Feb. 21, 2012. Mr. French did not attend the household goods training seminar. Consumer Protection staff recorded the following violations:

No. of Violations	WAC / Tariff	Description
2	WAC 480-15-890(1)	Failure to respond timely to commission's data request.
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 85(2)(g)	Failure to complete a table of measurements (cube sheet) in connection with the estimate.
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 85(2)(i)	Failure to note the number of hours and employees were involved in the move.
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 85(2)(q)	Failure to use required language on the estimate form.
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(a)	Failure to include company information on the bill of lading.
1	Tariff 15-C, item 95(1)(k)	Failure to use correct language on bill of lading.
1	WAC 480-15-890(2)	Failure to respond timely to staff's request for additional information.
1	WAC 480-15-810(1)	Failure to notify the customer in writing within ten days of receiving the claim.

On Mar. 1, 2012, Mr. French responded by email to consumer protection staff and indicated he would download the required forms from the commission's website, complete the cube sheet

⁴ Copy of Nov. 4, 2011 technical assistance email is attached as Appendix D.

⁵ Copy of technical assistance, dated Feb. 7, 2012, is attached as Appendix E.

⁶ Copy of Consumer Complaint 1133036, opened Feb. 2012, is attached as Appendix F.

inventory at the time of estimates, and make sure the bill of lading includes all of his contact information including phone number, email, and website address.

2012 (June) Staff Investigation - Case Record 12259

Prompted by a complaint made to the commission, staff reviewed Adam's Moving's website and found it contained advertising in conflict with RCW 81.80.305, WAC 480-15 and Tariff 15-C as follows:

- Adam's Moving's website advertised shrink wrap service for a fee. Tariff 15-C does not
 contain a charge for shrink wrapping items, and therefore household goods carriers may
 not bill for such a service.
- Adam's Moving's website advertised loss and damage protection valuation as a supplemental insurance policy. Tariff 15-C, Item 90 describes valuation as the level of the carrier's direct liability; valuation is not insurance.
- Adam's Moving's listed a \$39 fee for returned checks. Tariff 15-C does not allow for the collection of additional fees for returned checks.
- Adam's Moving's website included photographs of company moving trucks that did not appear to include any of the markings required by RCW 81.80.305, which requires the company's permitted name and permit number on both the driver and passenger doors of the power unit.

On June 22, 2012, Mr. French was provided technical assistance for the above violations. As part of the technical assistance, Mr. French was notified that he must update all website advertising to comply with commission rules; ensure all vehicles used for moving household goods are properly marked in accordance with RCW 81.80.305; and attend commission-conducted household goods training on July 11, 2012, at the commission headquarters in Olympia. Mr. French was required to report back to the commission by June 29, 2012, with evidence that all changes had been made.

On July 5, 2012, staff reviewed Adam's Moving's website and found that the charge for shrink wrapping service had been removed, but the \$39 returned check fee and valuation described as insurance had not been corrected. Staff left Mr. French voice messages on July 5 and 9 as a follow-up to the technical assistance letter, but did not receive a response from Mr. French. On July 9, staff sent an email to Mr. French with instructions to correct the information on the website, mark the driver and passenger doors of the company's moving vehicles with company name and permit number, and attend the July 11, 2012, household goods training on July 11, 2012.8 On July 9, Mr. French responded by email stating that he would be out of town and would not be able to attend household goods training and asked to be notified of another opportunity to attend the training.

On July 19, 2012, Mr. French was notified of a household goods training on Oct. 10, 2012, and was instructed to contact commission staff to reserve a spot in the class. Mr. French was also notified that a response to the violations, namely changing the wording from "insurance" to

⁷ Copy of June 22, 2012 technical assistance letter is attached as Appendix G.

⁸ Copy of July 9, 2012 email sent to Mr. French re correcting violations is attached as Appendix H.

"valuation," had not been completed. Mr. French was asked to respond to the commission by July 23 with evidence that all changes to the website had been made, the vehicles were appropriately marked, and that he had a reservation to attend the training. Mr. French did not respond by the July 23 deadline and was contacted by a compliance investigator on Aug. 10, 2012. Mr. French stated he would have his web-designer make the change immediately regarding the valuation violation and that he had put the correct signage on the driver and passenger doors of his moving trucks. The investigation was closed on Aug. 10, 2012.

2014 Staff Investigation

Staff initiated this investigation into the business practices of Adam's Moving when Compliance Investigations staff received a complaint that the company was violating numerous commission rules.

Household Goods Carrier Training

Since 2008, the commission has provided a free quarterly training for permitted household goods carriers. Attendance at a training is required of all newly permitted intrastate moving companies before they can receive permanent status. The training, which Mr. French was asked to attend numerous times as previously detailed, is also available to existing companies and their employees as a refresher course. Mr. French attended this training on Nov. 13, 2013.

⁹ Copy of investigator notes stating violations had been corrected is attached as Appendix I.

INVESTIGATION

Data Request

On Sept. 27, 2013, staff requested the following records and information from Mr. French:

- 1. For every residential move performed within the state of Washington from June 1, 2013, through August 31, 2013, please provide all <u>original</u> supporting documents related to each customer's move, including, but not limited to the bill of lading, estimate, supplemental estimate, inventory records, weight slips, and all documents related to temporary storage of the goods. Please note that the commission requires original documents. Photocopies will not be accepted. Your original documents will be returned to you at the conclusion of our review.
- 2. A copy of the company's customer complaint and claims register, listing all complaints and claims received from June 1, 2013, through August 31, 2013, and including all documents related to each complaint and claim.

Staff requested Adam's Moving respond to the data request no later than Oct. 11, 2013.¹⁰ On Oct. 10, Mr. French provided an incomplete response, submitting only customer bills of lading. Staff notified Mr. French that the response was incomplete.¹¹ Mr. French responded by email that he emailed estimates to most of his clients; however, there were some "pop up" jobs where formal estimates were not completed.¹² Mr. French completed his response on Oct. 31, 2013.

Staff used the documents and information furnished from this data request to conduct its investigation of the company's business practices.

¹⁰ A copy of Sept. 27, 2013, data request is attached as Appendix J.

¹¹ A copy of Oct. 11, 2013, email to Mr. French related to incomplete data request is attached as Appendix K.

¹² A copy of Oct. 11, 2013, email related to data request response is attached as Appendix L.

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO CUSTOMERS

Investigation

WAC 480-15-620 requires carriers to give each customer a copy of the commission-published consumer guide titled, "Moving in Washington State," (Moving Guide) at the time the carrier provides a written estimate.

In a telephone conversation on Feb. 20, 2014, Mr. French stated to staff that he has never provided a customer with the Moving Guide. Accordingly, Adam's Moving failed to provide customers the Moving Guide in connection with each of the 55 moves reviewed.¹³

Findings

Adam's Moving violated WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85, by failing to give each customer a copy of the commission publication. The Moving Guide is important because it explains consumers' rights and responsibilities and the commission's role in regulation and enforcement.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for 55 violations of WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85 for a possible total penalty of \$1,000.

¹³ Copy of record of staff conversation with Mr. French regarding the "Moving Guide" is attached as Appendix M.

ESTIMATES – REQUIRED

Investigation

WAC 480-15-630 requires every carrier to provide a written estimate to every customer prior to a move. Preliminary, verbal estimates are allowed, but a written estimate based on a visual inspection is required before the carrier performs the move. An estimate is a written approximation of the cost of a move prepared in compliance with the provisions of Tariff 15-C. Estimates are based on factors such as the size of the shipment and the van or truck space required, the amount of time needed to complete the move, and the type of special services to be provided.

Of the 55 moves reviewed, 21 bills of lading used by Adam's Moving contained unauthorized language that gave customers an option to decline a written estimate. ¹⁴ The language on the bill of lading stated,

"Written Estimate Release: (Initial one)
I waive my right to have Adam's Moving Service provide me with a written estimate
I have received a non-binding estimate for my move"

The practice of allowing customers to "opt out" of receiving an estimate violates WAC 480-15-630, which requires that an estimate be issued prior to the commencement of the move.

Findings

Adam's Moving failed to provide customers with a written estimate for 21 of the 55 moves reviewed in violation of WAC 480-15-630. Failing to provide written estimates to consumers prior to a move precludes them from making an informed decision; without performing a visual inspection and completing a cube sheet, the company cannot accurately or reasonable estimate the time it will take to perform the move.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for 21 violations of failing to provide customers with a written estimate prior to the move in violation of WAC 480-15-630, for a possible total penalty of \$1,000

¹⁴ Copy of bill of lading with unauthorized language related to written estimates is attached as Appendix N.

ESTIMATES – FORMAT AND COMPLETION

Investigation

WAC 480-15-630 requires carriers to issue an estimate prior to every move, and WAC 480-15-630(7) requires that the estimate include all of the elements listed in Tariff 15-C, Item 85.

For the 34 estimates reviewed, the company used an inadequate email estimate format. These estimates did not include one or more of the requirements of Tariff 15-C, Item 85:

- Item 85(2)(a) requires the carrier's address.
- Item 85(2)(b) indicating whether the estimate was binding or non-binding.
- Item 85(2)(c) requires a space for the customer to sign or initial stating that the customer was provided a copy of the commission's consumer guide, "Moving in Washington State."
- Item 85(2)(i) requires the number of hours each carrier personnel will be involved in the move and associated rates and charges.
- Item 85(2)(p) requires a statement that the estimate is a guarantee of the cost of the move and that the carrier will not charge above the estimated charges without preparing a supplemental estimate for a binding estimate.
- Item 85(2)(q) requires the following information for non-binding estimates:
 - o The estimate is not binding.
 - o The cost of the move may exceed the estimate
 - O The carrier must release the shipment to a customer upon payment of no more than 100 percent of the estimate. Carriers must allow customers at least 30 days from the date of delivery to pay amounts in excess of the 110 percent.
 - The customer is not required to pay more than 125 percent of the estimate regardless of the total cost unless the carrier issues and the customer accepts a supplemental estimate. (The 125 percent does not include any finance-related charge the carrier may assess for extending credit, such as interest or late payment fees.)

Findings

Adam's Moving failed to provide 34 customers with a correctly formatted estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85. Failing to provide accurate and complete written estimates to consumers prior to a move precludes them from making an informed decision. Staff found Adam's Moving had previously been cited for violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 85(2)(g), (i), and (q) on Feb. 21, 2012.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for 34 violations of failing to use a properly formatted estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85, for a possible total penalty of \$1,000.

ESTIMATES – CUBE SHEETS

Investigation

WAC 480-15-630 requires a household goods moving company to provide a written estimate to every customer before a move. Tariff 15-C, Item 85, section 2(g) also requires, with each estimate, "a household goods cube sheet." A cube sheet, also known as a "table of measurements," is an inventory of the items upon which the estimate is based, and includes the estimated cubic footage for each item. Adam's Moving was provided technical assistance on Feb. 21, 2012, for not completing a cube sheet. On March 1, 2012, Mr. French responded to staff that he would complete a cube sheet for each move at the time estimates are prepared.

Findings

Adam's Moving failed to provide cube sheets for each of the 55 moves reviewed prior to transporting those customers' goods, which constitutes 55 repeat violations of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85. Without completing a cube sheet, the company cannot accurately or reasonably estimate the time it will take to perform the move.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for failing to provide cube sheets to 55 customers in conjunction with estimates in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85, for a possible total penalty of \$1,000.

BILLS OF LADING - FORMAT

Investigation

WAC 480-15-710 requires a household goods company to issue a bill of lading for every move that includes all of the requirements listed in Tariff 15-C, Item 95. The bill of lading is a contract between the customer and the mover. It describes the mover's responsibilities, including the services they will perform, when and how they charge for the move, and what liability the mover will assume.

Staff reviewed the bills of lading from Adam's Moving for 55 moves and found violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 95, as noted below. Violations in bold print are repeat violations.

No. of Violations	Tariff	Description
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(a)	One or more of the following violations occurred: failure to
		include complete or correct company information which
		includes the name, permit number, address, and telephone
		number of the household goods carrier and the fax, website, and email address, if any.
15	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(b)	Failure to record complete customer name and telephone
		number
40	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(d,e)	Failure to record exact origin and destination addresses
3	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(f)	Failure to record additional points or stops
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(h)	Failure to indicate if the estimate was binding or nonbinding
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(i)	Failure to include required release of shipment statement
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(j)	Failure to include a statement about extended credit
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(k)	Failure to include language related to replacement cost
		coverage
55	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(1)(m)	Failure to adequately document start, stop, and interruption
		times
1	Tariff 15-C, Item 95(n)	Including unidentified customer charges ¹⁵
389		

Findings

Staff found a 389 separate and distinct violations of WAC 480-15-710 and Tariff 15-C, Item 95 in the 55 moves reviewed. Because Mr. French received technical assistance for Tariff 15-C, Items 95(1)(a) and (k) in February 2012, 233 of the violations are repeat violations.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for failing to use a properly formatted bill of lading in violation of WAC 480-15-710 and Tariff 15-C, Item 95. Staff found 389 violations in the 55 bills of lading reviewed.

¹⁵ A copy of customer Nelson's Bill of Lading with unidentified and improper charges is attached as Appendix O.

TARIFF RATES AND CHARGES

Investigation – Minimum Hours

WAC 480-15-490(3) requires a household goods company to bill charges according to the tariff. Tariff 15-C, Item 230(7) requires minimum charges for hourly rates moves, including a minimum of one hour, Monday through Friday, excluding state-recognized holidays, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The tariff also requires a minimum of four hours for moves performed on a Saturday or Sunday at the customer's request.

Adam's Moving charged a two hour minimum on Monday, Aug. 19, for customers Al and Jenny Noriega.

Adam's Moving failed to bill the required minimum of four hours for a Saturday or Sunday move at the customers' request for the following moves:

- On Sunday, July 28, customers Hyde and Kim were billed for 3.0 hours.
- On Saturday, July 27, customer LaBreque was billed for 2.75 hours.
- On Sunday, August 25, customer Duarte was billed for 2.5 hours.
- On Saturday, August 24, customer Gamache was billed for 3.75 hours.
- On Saturday, August 24, customer Maisen was billed for 3.75 hours.
- On Saturday, August 31, customer Finley was billed for 2.75 hours.
- On Sunday, June 23, customer Mitroshkova was billed for 3.75 hours.

On Mar. 17, 2010, Mr. French was given technical assistance for violations related to incorrect charges, and specifically, Tariff 15-C, Item 230, for incorrectly charging customers a two hour minimum. Mr. French was directed to remove the listing of two hour minimum charges from his website. He was also notified that future violations identified by commission staff of the rules or tariff items addressed would be subject to enforcement actions, which could include financial penalties. While Mr. French did remove the two hour minimum language from his website, he continued to advertise a two hour minimum rate through emails and charged customers a two hour minimum rate. Mr. French also failed to bill the required four hour minimum for seven weekend moves reviewed.

Findings

Adam's Moving's practice of charging customers a two hour minimum on weekdays and failing to charge a four hour minimum on Saturdays and Sundays constitutes repeat violations of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C, Item 230(7).

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for violation of WAC 480-15-490(3) which requires a household goods company to bill charges according to the tariff. Tariff 15-C, Item 230(7) requires minimum charges for hourly rates moves, including a minimum of one hour, Monday through Friday, excluding state-recognized holidays, between 8:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m.

In addition, staff considers the seven violations of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C, Item 230(7) for not billing the required four hours for weekend moves as technical assistance. If future violations are found, staff may recommend penalties or take other enforcement action.

Investigation – Credit Card Fees

Adam's Moving charged customers a three percent credit card fee on 14 of the 55 bills of lading reviewed. Adam typically corresponds with his customers using what he calls "introductory emails." The emails describe payment as:

"We collect payment upon completion of your move. We accept cash, check and all major credit cards.

Cash: 3% discount

Credit/Debit 3% fee"

Tariff 15-C does not authorize fees for credit or debit cards.

Findings

Adam's Moving violated 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C by advertising and charging customers an unauthorized three percent credit card fee as a separate line item. On Nov. 4, 2011, Mr. French received technical assistance for advertising a three percent convenience charge for credit card payments on his company's website. At that time, Mr. French was directed to remove the credit card fee language from his website. On Dec. 5, 2011, the language was removed from the company's website; however, Mr. French continued to advertise the three percent credit card fee in emails to his customers.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$500 for each of the fourteen violations of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C for charging an unauthorized credit card fee, for a total potential penalty of \$7,000.

Staff also recommends that the commission direct Adam's Moving to issue refunds to all customers improperly charged a credit card fee in the two year period preceding the date the formal complaint was filed.

Investigation – Billing for Travel Time

Companies may not bill travel time unless the customer has been provided a completed, signed, and dated estimate on a day prior to the move date. If the estimate is provided on the day of the move, after the company has already traveled to the origin address, no travel time may be charged. Companies must charge travel time when an estimate has been fully completed and provided to the customer prior to the company travelling to the origin.

Adam's Moving bills a flat rate for travel time, but the documentation on the bills of lading is so poor that is difficult to decipher. Many of the bills of lading reviewed simply have a time entered for travel, with no arrival time filled in. The forms have a depart time, but the form is incomplete and does not have a space for return travel.

¹⁶ Copy of Adam's Moving introductory email, showing the 3 percent credit card fee is attached as Appendix P.

Findings

Adam's Moving has not documented billing for travel time appropriately on the bills of lading, and may or may not be charging customers incorrectly for travel time. Staff discussed this issue with Mr. French by telephone and he is aware that he may not bill customers for travel time until the customer has been provided a completed, signed, and dated estimated prior to the move.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Adam's Moving charge customers for travel time as required by Tariff 15-C, Item 230. Staff considered this investigation as the company's technical assistance regarding travel time charges. If future violations are found, staff may recommend penalties or take other enforcement action.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Investigation

Staff reviewed advertisements on Adam's Moving's website, commercial vehicles, craigslist.org, and Adam's Moving's Facebook page. WAC 480-15-610(1) requires carriers to include the commission-issued permit number, name or trade name as recorded at the commission, physical address, and telephone number in any advertisement for household goods moving services. Staff found Adam's Moving in violation of the following rules related to advertising:

- Failure to display the company's commission-issued permit number on its website, Facebook, and in customer correspondence. 17, 18
- Failure to display the company's address as recorded at the commission on its website, Facebook, craigslist.org ads, and customer correspondence.
- Failure to display the company's name as recorded at the commission on its website, Facebook, and customer correspondence. The company name recorded at the commission is Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC. As of the date of this report, Mr. French had not applied for an alternate or additional trade name.

On March 17, 2010, Mr. French received technical assistance for failing to include his company's commission-issued permit number on his website. Mr. French was notified that future violations of the same rules or tariff items would be subject to enforcement action, which could include financial penalties. Mr. French again received technical assistance for the same violation on May 16, 2011.

WAC 480-15-610(2) states that carriers' advertisements may not be misleading, false, or deceptive. Adam's Moving's advertisements on craigslist.org claimed the company is accredited by the Better Business Bureau (BBB)¹⁹; BBB's website indicates Adam's Moving is not accredited.²⁰

Findings

Staff finds that Adam's Moving has committed repeat violations of WAC 480-15-610(1) by failing to display the company's commission-issued permit number on its advertisements on its website, Craigslist, in customer correspondence, and on Facebook. In addition, Adam's Moving's advertisements display an address and company name that is not on record with the commission. Finally, staff finds Adam's Moving in violation of WAC 480-15-610(2) for advertising falsely on Craigslist that the company is accredited by the BBB.

Recommendation

Staff recommends a penalty of up to \$1,000 for ten violations of WAC 480-15-610(1) and (2) related to advertising by not displaying on its website, Facebook page, and in customer correspondence its commission-issued permit number, the company address as recorded at the commission, and the company name as recorded at the commission.

¹⁷ A snapshot of Adam's Moving website is attached as Appendix Q.

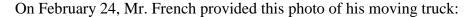
¹⁸ Copy of Adam's Moving Facebook page is attached as Appendix R.

¹⁹ Copy of Adam's Moving advertisement on Craigslist claiming BBB accreditation is attached as Appendix S.

²⁰ Copy of BBB's website documenting Adam's Moving is not accredited is attached as Appendix T.

Investigation – Vehicle Markings

Staff reviewed Adam's Moving's website and noticed the commercial vehicles displayed on the page do not have the correct markings as required by RCW 81.80.305. On Feb. 20, 2014, staff advised Mr. French by phone that he must ensure his full business name appears on his commercial vehicles. Mr. French stated to staff that he would be leasing new trucks in May and they will all have the correct information on them. Staff asked Mr. French what the trucks have on them now, because the photo on his website does not have the required information. Mr. French stated that the photo was photo shopped and that his trucks actually display the correct information. Staff asked Mr. French to take a current photo of his moving truck and send it to the commission. Mr. French agreed to take the photo.





On March 26, staff sent the following email request to Mr. French:

Do you have current photos of your moving vehicles? The one you sent me appears to be an older vehicle than what your ads show. You received technical assistance in June 2012 for violations of signage on your truck. On Aug. 18, 2012, you informed staff that you had put the correct signage on the trucks (driver and passenger doors). The signage is not visible in the photo you sent me. Thanks.

Mr. French responded on March 27:

The truck on the website is clip art for websites and not a truck in our fleet. we [sic] hastily redid our website last year and dont [sic] have any actual photos of our moving trucks. I got rid of the door decals when I signed the lease for the 5 new trucks, not realizing there was such a delay in getting them. We will have our new trucks with our logo and door decals in 3 weeks

Staff responded to Mr. French on March 27:

Please send current photos of all your moving vehicles. You previously received technical assistance for violations of RCW 81.80.305, Markings Required. It is a separate violation for each vehicle, each day the vehicle is in operation without proper signage.

Mr. French again responded to staff regarding vehicle signage was sent to staff on March 27:

Our new trucks are coming in 2-3 weeks with our new logo and door decals

Staff responded to Mr. French on March 27:

Until you take possession of the leased vehicles, you are conducting your operation with your current trucks. Please send me a photo of your current company vehicles. Thank you.

Mr. French responded on March 27:

I assumed I was okay with the new trucks on the way. I'll order new placards for the trucks until the new trucks arrive

To date, Mr. French has not provided evidence that the vehicles bear the required markings. Mr. French was provided technical assistance on June 22, 2012, for violations of RCW 81.80.305 and was required to ensure all vehicles used for moving household goods are properly marked. Mr. French was to respond back to the commission by June 29 with evidence that all changes had been made. Mr. French did not respond, so staff left Mr. French voicemail messages on July 5 and 9 as a follow-up to the technical assistance letter. On July 9, staff sent an email to Mr. French with instructions to correct the information on the website and mark the driver and passenger doors of the company's moving vehicles with the company's name and permit number.

On July 19, 2012, Mr. French notified staff that he would respond to the commission by July 23 with evidence that all changes had been made, the vehicles were appropriately marked and that he had a reservation to attend the training. Mr. French did not respond by the July 23 deadline, and was contacted by staff on Aug. 10, 2012. Mr. French stated he would have his web-designer make the change immediately regarding the valuation violation and that he had put the correct signage on the driver and passenger doors of his moving trucks. ²¹ The investigation was closed on Aug. 10, 2012.

Findings

Staff finds that Adam's Moving violated RCW 81.80.305 by failing to properly display the full company name and commission-issued permit number that is on record with the commission.

²¹ Copy of investigator notes stating violations had been corrected is attached as Appendix U.

Recommendation

Staff advises that Adam's Moving must ensure commercial vehicle markings are displayed in compliance with RCW 81.80.305. The markings on the commercial vehicles are not currently correct, but they do bear the company name and commission-issued permit number. Staff considers this portion of the investigation as technical assistance regarding vehicle markings. Staff also recommends Mr. French be required to furnish evidence—e.g., a photograph of the vehicle—of proper markings when he takes possession of the leased vehicles. If future violations are found, staff may recommend penalties of take other enforcement actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Penalty

In this investigation, staff documented 579 violations of WAC 480-15 and Tariff 15-C, as follows:

- 55 violations of WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85 for failing to provide customers with a copy of the *Moving Guide*.
- 21 violations of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85 for failing to provide customers a written estimate.
- 34 violations of WAC 480-15-630 for using improperly formatted estimates.
- 55 violations of WAC 480-15-630, Tariff 15-C, Item 85 for failing to provide customers a cube sheet inventory in conjunction with the estimate.
- 389 violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 95 found within 55 improperly formatted bills of lading.
- 1 violation of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C for charging incorrect minimum hour charges.
- 14 violations of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C for charging unauthorized credit card fees.
- 10 violations of WAC 480-15-610 for failing to display correct company information on all advertisements.

Staff typically recommends a "per violation" penalty against a regulated company where the violations result in serious customer harm; for repeat violations of a rule after a company receives technical assistance from staff; or for intentional violations of commission laws or rules. The commission has the authority to assess penalties of up to \$1,000 per violation, per day following a formal complaint and hearing.²²

In this case, staff recommends the commission issue a formal complaint assessing a total penalty of up to \$14,000 for the violations cited in this report. Staff believes that the number of violations, which included a large number of repeat violations following extensive technical assistance, warrants a penalty of this size. Staff considered the following factors in arriving at the recommended penalty amount:

1. How serious or harmful the violation is to the public.

Staff believes the violations cited in this report caused serious harm to consumers. Failing to provide written estimates to consumers prior to a move precludes them from making an informed decision; without performing a visual inspection and completing a cube sheet, the company cannot accurately or reasonably estimate the time it will take to perform the move. Additionally, Adam's Moving failed to provide its customers with a copy of the *Moving Guide*, which explains consumers' rights and responsibilities and the commission's role in regulation and enforcement.

Adam's Moving has demonstrated a disregard for commission laws and rules related to household good carriers. Because Adam's Moving failed to fulfill its obligation as a

²² RCW 81.04.380 allows the commission to assess a penalty of up to \$1,000 for each violation after hearing.

regulated company on multiple occasions, valuable state resources were used to repeatedly investigate Adam's Moving's business practices.

2. Whether the violation is intentional.

Because the violations continued despite extensive technical assistance, staff believes the evidence supports a finding that the violations were intentional. For example, Mr. French previously received technical assistance for 1) advertising a two hour minimum charge for moves, and 2) advertising a three percent credit card fee on his website. Mr. French was informed he was not in compliance with commission rules and Tariff 15-C, and was asked to remove the violating language from his website. This investigation found Mr. French removed the two hour minimum statement and credit card fee language from his website, but continued to advertise, and charge, customers two hour minimum rates and credit card fees. This behavior leads staff to believe that Mr. French removed those items from his website merely to appease staff, then continued the business practice despite being cautioned.

3. Whether the company was cooperative and responsive.

Although the company responded fairly quickly to telephone calls, requests for data were frequently tardy, incomplete, or ignored.

4. Whether the company promptly corrected the violations and remedied the impacts. The company has not corrected many of the violations noted in this investigation.

5. The number of violations and the number of customers impacted.

Staff reviewed 55 moves and found a total of 579 violations. For each move reviewed, customers were impacted by not receiving the *Moving Guide* to help them make informed decisions about their move. Some customers were charged credit card fees as a separate line item, which is not authorized by Tariff 15-C. Some customers were wrongly charged travel fees. Customers were not provided a cube inventory sheet from which estimates are based. Of the 55 moves reviewed, all 55 moves contained violations.

6. The likelihood of recurrence.

Staff believes it is likely, absent a penalty and comprehensive compliance plan that the same or similar violations will recur.

7. The company's past performance regarding compliance, violations, and penalties. Adam's Moving has had the benefit of technical assistance for a variety of violations in 2010, 2011, and 2012, and many of the violations noted in this report are repeat violations. Mr. French was required to remove language on his website related to credit card fees and minimum hour charges, and he did; however, he continued to advertise those unauthorized rates through individual emails to his customers. Mr. French also continued to charge minimum hour rates and credit card fees in violation of Tariff 15-C, Item 230. Mr. French has not received any penalties for violations to date. Mr. French was requested to attend household goods training on numerous occasions as part of the technical assistance, but did not do so until Nov. 13, 2013, after he was notified his business was being investigated.

8. The company's existing compliance program.

Staff is not aware of any existing compliance program.

9. The size of the company.

Adam's Moving reported operating revenue of \$886,383.28 for the 2013 reporting period.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the commission issue a formal complaint and assess a penalty of up to \$14,000 for the following violations:

- Up to \$1,000 for failing to provide customers with a copy of the *Moving Guide*, in violation of WAC 480-15-620 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to \$1,000 for failing to provide written estimates in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to \$1,000 for failing to use a properly formatted estimate in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to \$1,000 for failing to provide a cube sheet in conjunction with customer estimates in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 85.
- Up to a \$1,000 for failing to provide a properly formatted bill of lading in violation of WAC 480-15-630 and Tariff 15-C, Item 95.
- Up to \$1,000 for the repeat violations of failing to charge customers the correct minimum hour fees in the terms, conditions, and rates imposed by Tariff 15-C in violation of WAC 480-15-490(3).
- Up to \$7,000 for the fourteen violations of charging a separate line item (credit card fee) that is not authorized by the tariff and in violation of WAC 480-15-490(3) and Tariff 15-C. Staff also recommends that Adam's Moving issue refunds to all customers improperly charged a credit card fee in the two year period preceding the date the formal complaint was filed.
- Up to \$1,000 for the advertising violations of WAC 480-15-610(1)(2) and Tariff 15-C.

Staff also recommends that Adam's Moving carefully review this report because it contains valuable technical assistance for the following violations:

- Violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 230 for charging customers travel time when estimate was not done, or done at the same time of the move.
- Violations of Tariff 15-C, Item 230 for failing to charge seven customers the required four hour minimum charge for weekend moves.
- Five violations of RCW 81.80.305 for commercial vehicles not marked as required.

APPENDIX A

Adam's Moving and Delivery Service

130 NE 95th St., Seattle WA 98155

HG062045

To whom it may concern,

I am the owner of a local moving company in the Seattle area and I would like to remain anonymous. I feel the need to report Adams Moving and Delivery Service in Seattle due to the fact that I believe he and his company have an unfair competitive advantage in the industry as a result of not complying with UTC regulations. Our company is fully compliant and we consistently aim to better our process in order to remain transparent within the industry and the local and state government. I believe that it is unfair for us to train our employees only to be taken away by other companies with lower business costs as a result of cutting corners around these regulations. From my perspective the wages he pays his employees are a result of him not reporting a majority of cash sales and not paying his staff overtime resulting in underpayment of his payroll and L & I taxes that he should be paying. Below is a list of items in which Adam's is not compliant and this list has been compiled as a result of multiple employees that have left our company to work for Adams and have come back once they were terminated or resigned with Adam's company.

- •Adam's does not pay overtime: He pays his employees cash after 80 hours in a pay period. If you look at his paystubs all employee hours stop at 80 hours or less. I have spoken to drivers that claim they have been paid 40-50 hours of overtime in cash each pay period.
- •None of the drivers at Adam's has a DOT health card with exception of those that had once worked for our company. We have had multiple drivers come from Adams and none of them have had a DOT card.
- •Adam's does not comply with Drivers Hours of Service and does not keep a driver's time log. Many of Adam's drivers work 60-80 hours a week and pays them cash to hide the actual hours that they work.

APPENDIX A (continued)

- •Adam's does not provide written estimates for his customers.
- •Adam's does not do annual DOT Inspections on his trucks.
- •Adam's does not keep maintenance records on his fleet.
- •Adam's does not keep complete driver's files on his drivers, does not formally drive test his drivers or do certifications of violations on his drivers
- •Adam's underpays his annual UTC regulatory dues by underreporting his actual revenue as a result of misreporting his cash sales.
- •Adam's underreports employee hours and hence underreports his L&I taxes
- •Adam's underreports his gross receipts and does not pay his full share of taxes to the IRS

These items listed above are all UTC regulations and take time and management to fully comply. As a moving company regulated by the UTC we experience the cost of this management on a daily basis. For another competitor to be taking so many short cuts and not operating within the regulations of the UTC it is frustrating when we are trying to do right only to be undercut by a competitor with an unfair advantage. Wages are key to employees within the moving industry. If we were to not follow the regulations of the UTC we would be able to offer much better wages that we currently can. All that we want is a level playing field between us and our competitors. It is very difficult for us when we spend so much time, energy and money training our employees only to be undercut and have these newly trained employees taken away by another company that offers higher wages due to the fact that they are cutting costs by not following regulations.

Thank you for taking the time for allowing us to voice our concerns and please let me know if you have any questions at all. I will be happy to help.

Anonymous Mover

APPENDIX B

March 17, 2010

Adam French Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC 17355 First Avenue NW Shoreline, WA 98177

Re: Providing household goods moving services

Dear Mr. French:

On March 11, 2010, Utilities and Transportation Commission (commission) staff reviewed your Web site, <u>www.adamsmovingservice.com</u>. On your Web site, you state that you have a two (2) hour minimum. Please note this is a violation of the commission's Tariff 15-C, Item 230, Hourly Rates. In accordance with Item 230, the minimum charge for a shipment moving under hourly rates is one hour. The exception is a four (4) hour minimum for services provided at the <u>customer's</u> request Monday through Friday, before 8:00a.m., and after 6:00p.m., or on a Saturday, Sunday or state-recognized holiday.

In addition, your Web site states that an additional "fuel surcharge" is applied to local moves. You may only assess charges that are authorized by Tariff 15-C, which does not contain a provision that allows you to assess a "fuel surcharge."

Finally, your Web site does not include your commission-issued permit number. Under WAC 480-15-610, Carriers must include the commission-issued permit number on all advertisements, including Web sites.

You must respond to us in writing by March 31, 2010, regarding the following issues:

- Please confirm that you have changed the language on your Web site to accurately reflect a
 one (1) hour minimum in compliance with Tariff 15-C, Item 230 (with the exception of a
 four (4) hour minimum for services provided at the <u>customer's</u> request Monday through
 Friday, before 8:00a.m., and after 6:00p.m., or on a Saturday, Sunday or state-recognized
 holiday).
- Please confirm that you have removed the language regarding a "fuel surcharge" on your Web site
- Please confirm that you have added your commission-issued permit number to your Web site.

APPENDIX B (continued)

Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC March 17, 2010 Page 2

You may address your response to Rayne Pearson, Compliance Investigator. Ms. Pearson may be contacted at (360) 664-1111 or rpearson@utc.wa.gov should you have any questions. Please note that the commission considers this letter to be technical assistance for you. Any future violations identified by commission staff of the rules or tariff items addressed here will be subject to enforcement actions, which may include financial penalties.

The commission holds household goods training seminars throughout Washington several times a year. Attendees receive training on the applicable Washington Administrative Codes and Tariff 15-C. The next scheduled training in Olympia, Washington is September 16, 2010, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is no charge for the class. This training is required for all new household goods carriers and is open to all existing, permitted carriers as well. Training will also be offered in Olympia in June 2010; the exact date has yet to be determined. For further information you may contact Suzanne Stillwell at (360) 664-1103 or sstillwe@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

David W. Danner Executive Secretary

APPENDIX C



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250 (360) 664-1160 • ITY (360) 586-8203

May 16, 2011

Adam French
Adams Moving and Delivery Service LLC
130 NE 95th Street,
Seattle, WA 98155

Dear Mr. French:

The Utilities and Transportation Commission received information that your company was advertising services conflicting with the terms, conditions and rates published in the Tariff. Additionally that you failed to include required information in your advertisement.

Based on a review of your company's website, <u>www.adamsmovingservice.com</u> commission staff has found that your company was in violation of commission rules as follows:

- 1. One violation of WAC 480-15-490(3), for advertising insurance valuations conflicting with those set out in Tariff No. 15-C, specifically Item 90(9)(b)(c).
- 2. One violation of WAC 480-15-610(6), for advertising services and rates that conflict with those in the Tariff.
- 3. One violation of WAC 480-15-610(1), for failing to include in your website the commission-issued permit number.

Pursuant to your telephone conversation with Richard La Monica on April 5, 2011, and a subsequent review of www.adamsmovingservice.com your company website now appears to be in compliance with WAC 480-15-490(3) and WAC 480-15-610(1)(6). Although these violations have been recorded, the commission will not pursue further enforcement action related to these matters at this time.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Adams Moving and Delivery Service LLC May 16, 2011 Page 2

To avoid future enforcement action, you must comply with the relevant Revised Code of Washington [RCW], WAC'S and Tariff. For additional reference you may download the statute, rules and Tariff from the commission's website at www.utc.wa.gov/mover.

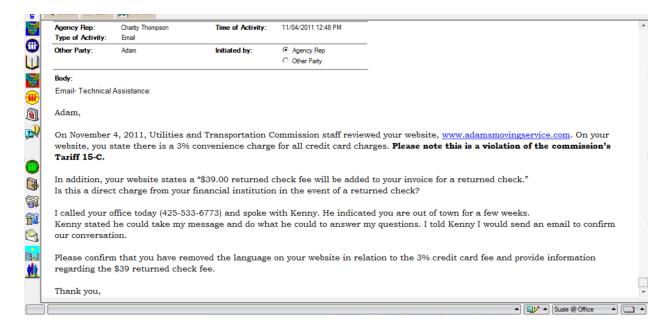
If you have questions about this letter or household goods laws and rules please contact Mr. La Monica, Compliance Investigator. Mr. La Monica can be reached at (360) 664-1149 or at rlamonica@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Sharon Wallace, Assistant Director

Consumer Protection and Communication

APPENDIX D



APPENDIX E

Activity L	og	Case Name:	Adam's Moving and	Delivery Service, LLC
Agency Rep:	Charity T	hompson	Time of Activity:	02/07/2012 02:53 PM
Type of Activity:	Email			
Other Party:	Adam Fre	ench	Initiated by:	Agency RepOther Party

Body:

Email to Adam Technical Assistance:

Adam,

On February 7, 2012, Utilities and Transportation Commission staff reviewed your website, www.adamsmovingservice.com. On your website, you state "Payment is due at the time of completion. We are unable to send a bill for payment at a later date. No exceptions." **Please note this is a violation of the commission's Tariff 15-C.**

Tariff 15-C, Item 80 (4) states:

- 4. Unless credit arrangements are made or the move is paid in advance, payment for the move is due upon delivery. If the total due upon delivery exceeds the original estimate, the carrier must release the shipment to the customer when the customer pays either:
- a. The full amount of the original binding estimate and supplemental estimates.
- b. 110 percent of the original nonbinding estimate including supplemental estimates.
- 5. The carrier must allow customers at least 30 days from the date of delivery to pay amounts in excess of the 110 percent described in (4)(b) above.

Please confirm that you have updated your website to include the correct payment information as indicated in Tariff 15-C, Item 80(4) no later than February 17, 2012. Please note that the commission considers this email to be technical assistance for you.

If you have any questions please feel free to let me know.

Thank you,

APPENDIX F

	Complaint ADAM'S MOVI		ERY SERVICE, I	
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This document can be read by all users of the database. This document can be edited by: [ComplaintEditors]

APPENDIX G



STATE OF WASHINGTON WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250 (360) 664-1160 • TTY (360) 586-8203

June 22, 2012

Adam French d/b/a Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC 17355 First Avenue NW Shoreline, WA 98177

RE: Household Goods Services provided in the state of Washington

Dear Mr. French:

The Utilities and Transportation Commission staff recently reviewed Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC's (Adam's Moving) advertising on the company's website, www.adamsmovingservice.com. As a result of that review, staff found three violations of WAC 480-15-610(6) which states, "carriers may not advertise services or rates and charges that conflict with those in the tariff." The three violations are as follows:

- Your website states, "Let us shrink wrap your valuables for added protection during your move. Please ask us for more details on the day of your move.
 - 1. Small furniture items: End tables, chairs, cabinets etc. will be \$5.00.
 - 2. Large items: Head board/footboard, Sofa, dressers, dining room tables will be \$10.00.

Required items: This list below are items that we require be shrink wrapped to be protected from damage. TV's, Grandfather Clocks, Artwork, Mirrors, Any piece with glass such as a hutch or china cabinet. We use cardboard to protect the glass and shrink wrap protective pads to cover all areas of the piece to prevent damage. If you decline this preventative measure, we'll have you sign a liability release waiver on the specific item."

Tariff 15-C does not contain a charge for shrink wrapping items, and therefore household goods carriers may not bill for such a service.

APPENDIX G (continued)

Adam French d/b/a Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC June 22, 2012 Page 2

- Your website describes valuation as being a supplemental insurance policy. Tariff 15-C, Item 90 describes valuation as the level of the carrier's direct liability. As valuation is not a supplemental insurance policy, please change the language to accurately reflect loss and damage protection.
- Your website states, "A \$39.00 returned check fee will be added to your invoice for a returned check." Tariff 15-C does not allow for the collection of additional fees due to returned checks. Please remove this statement from your website.
- 4. Further, your company's website includes photos of your moving trucks that do not appear to include any of the markings required by RCW 81.80.305, which requires the company's permitted name and permit number on both the driver and passenger doors of the power unit. If you have not already done so, you must ensure that your vehicles comply with this law.

The commission recognizes that your company has not received technical assistance on these issues in the past and will not take enforcement action at this time, so long as you:

- · Update all website advertising to comply with these rules.
- Ensure all vehicles used for moving household goods are properly marked in accordance with RCW 81.80.305.
- By June 29, 2012, report back to the commission contact listed below with evidence that all changes have been made.
- Attend the commission-conducted household goods training on Wednesday July 11,
 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the commission headquarters in Olympia.

Staff considers this letter your technical assistance, if future violations are found, staff may recommend penalties or other enforcement action.

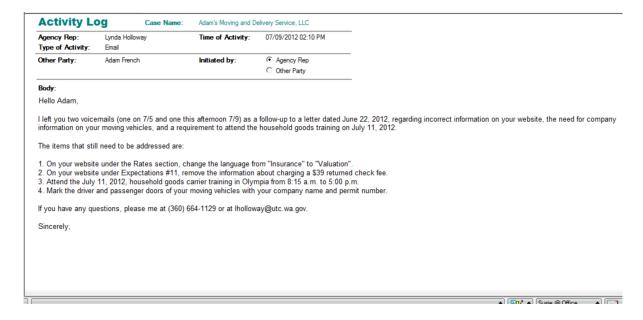
If you have any questions, please contact Lynda Holloway, Compliance Investigator. Ms. Holloway may be reached at (360) 664-1129 or at lholloway@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

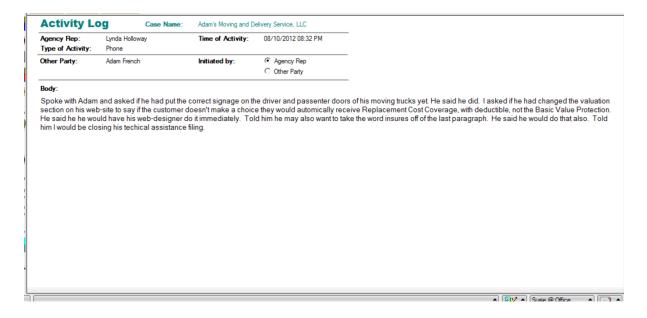
Sharon Wallace, Assistant Director

Consumer Protection and Communications

APPENDIX H



APPENDIX I



APPENDIX J



STATE OF WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Dr. S.W., P.O. Box 47250 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7250 (360) 664-1160 • www.utc.wa.gov

September 27, 2013

Adam French Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC 17355 First Avenue NW Shoreline, WA 98177-3635

RE: Data Request

Dear Mr. French:

Under Washington State law (Revised Code of Washington 81.04.070), the Utilities and Transportation Commission has the authority to inspect the accounts, books, papers, and documents of any household goods moving company doing business in this state.

As part of a staff review of your household goods moving company, please send us the following information and documents:

- 1. For every residential move performed within the state of Washington from June 1, 2013, through August 31, 2013, please provide all <u>original</u> supporting documents related to each customer's move, including, but not limited to the bill of lading, estimate, supplemental estimate, inventory records, weight slips, and all documents related to temporary storage of the goods. Please note that the commission requires original documents. Photocopies will not be accepted. Your original documents will be returned to you at the conclusion of our review.
- A copy of the company's customer complaint and claims register, listing all complaints and claims received from June 1, 2013, through August 31, 2013, and including all documents related to each complaint and claim.

You are required to furnish the above requested documents no later than 5 p.m., Oct. 11, 2013. Please attach a copy of this letter to the documents for reference.

APPENDIX J (continued)

Adam French September 27, 2013

If you have any questions you may contact Susie Paul, Compliance Investigator. Ms. Paul can be reached at (360) 664-1105 or spaul@utc.wa.gov. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Sincerely,

Steven V. King

nevini

Executive Director and Secretary

APPENDIX K

 From:
 Paul, Susie (UTC).

 To:
 Adams Moving Service.

 Subject:
 RE: Adam"s Moving Service.

Date: Thursday, October 10, 2013 2:17:00 PM

Hi Adam,

I received your package today with your bill of ladings. I haven't been able to review all of your records, but the information you sent me seems to be incomplete. I don't see any estimates, supplemental estimates, inventory records, weight slips, any documents regarding storage, etc.

Please contact me as soon as possible with information about the requested records.

Thanks.

Susie Paul

Compliance Investigator
Consumer Protection and Communications
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Phone: (360) 664-1105 / email: spaul@utc.wa.gov

APPENDIX L

 From:
 Adams Moving Service

 To:
 Paul, Susie (UTC)

 Subject:
 Re: Adam's Moving Service

Date: Thursday, October 10, 2013 5:46:25 PM

Hi Susie,

I must have just missed you. I left a VM and will look forward to your return call Friday. In the meantime, I thought I would give you more info. We don't do long distance moves or offer storage, so unless I'm mistaken, I don't think we needed to have weight slips or inventory slips. We also had no damage claims. I have estimates in email form with most individual client. There were some pop up jobs where formal estimates were not completed.

I should let you know that I'm expecting a baby very soon and am helping care for my finance in the last weeks of pregnancy. This is our first child so we are both a mess. :)

If I miss your call, I'll get back to you ASAP.

Talk to you tomorrow,

Adam French 206.501.5725

Thank you,

Adam French, Owner <u>www.adamsmovingservice.com</u> <u>adamsmoving1@gmail.com</u> 206-251-1725

Please leave us a review!

https://plus.google.com/114195444103753665973/about?hl=en

http://www.yelp.com/biz/adams-moving-and-delivery-service-seattle

APPENDIX M

Activity Log Case Name: Adam's Moving and Delivery Service, LLC

Agency Rep: Susie Paul Time of Activity: 02/20/2014 04:21 PM

Type of Activity: Phone

Other Party: Adam French Initiated by: Other Party

Body:

Adam returned my call. Said that he is providing a training for his employees next Wednesday. I asked Adam if he has reviewed the tariff and he said no. I suggested he look over the tariff prior to training his staff. Adam said that he is going to make sure his employees fill out the bill of lading correctly, including travel and break times. I asked Adam if he was aware that he can not charge a 2 hour minimum and he stated he did not know that, and again, I suggested he review the tariff rules. Adam has never provided customers with a binding/non-binding estimate or provided his customers with, "Your Guide to Moving in Washington State." I advised Adam to ensure his full business name is on his trucks and website. Adam said he will be leasing new trucks in May and they will all have the correct info. I asked what his trucks have on them now, because the photo of his truck does not have the requirement info. Adam said that the photo was photoshopped and that his trucks actually have the correct wording on them. I asked Adam to take a picture of his moving truck and send it to me. He said he will and that h will know the Tariff inside and out before Wednesday training.

APPENDIX N

Adam's Moving Service

17355 1st Ave NW Shoreline, WA 98177 Phone: (206) 251-1725

UTC Permit # HG 62045

Uniform Household Goods Bill of Lading

Customer: This bill of lading establishes a contract between you and Adam's Moving. It confirms instructions and authorizes the carrier to move,

pack, store, and/or perform services shown. Before you sign this document it is important that you itsi read the document, including the back, and that you ask for an explanation of anything that is not clear or is different from any previous information received from the carrier or carrier's representatives. This contract is subject to conditions on the back of this form.
Special Notes: Jana Mitchell
Phone 11 Mars and when
Customer Jason Mitchell Phone Email jasonuital no qual an
Origin Address: OU 27 Destination Address:
Scattle, WA 981/2
Additional Stops: Additional Notes:
LOSS AND DAMAGE PROTECTION (Valuation):
Complement must initial one option. Basic Value Protection I release this shipment to a value of 60 cents per pound per article, at no cost to me. This means I will be paid 60 cents per
plund for the net weight of the lost or damaged item, regardless of the actual value of the item. "Aost economical. Lowest Level of coverage." Replacement Cost Coverage with Deductible We will repair the damage to your satisfaction, pay you for the lost or damaged articles
(less the \$300 deductible), or replace the lost or damaged article for any amount over the \$300 deductible. The \$300 deductible applies to the entire shipment rather
than each individual article. This level of coverage costs \$1.15 per \$100 of declared value. Declared Value of Shipment
Valuation Premium Replacement Cost Coverage with no Deductible 11/2 will repair damage to your satisfaction, reimbarse you for the replacement
cost, or replace lost or damaged articles. This level of protection costs \$1.40 per \$100 of your declared value of the entire shipment.
Declared Value of Shipment Valuation Premium
Written Estimate Release: (Initial One) Will I waive my right to have Adam's Moving Service provide me with a written estimate
I have received a non-binding estimate for my move
Customer Release: I have read and understand this contract, and release po household goods to the carrier subject to the
term unt good it in softhis contract.
Steparine of Customer Date Signature of Carrier Representative Date
Signature of Customer Date Signature of Carrier Representative Date Date D
Date Trucks Personnel Travel Arrive Depart Total Hrs. Rate Charges
6/7 (3 21/8 _ 8.4) (.5 13) 8/1.50
Additional Charges:
Totals: 9()3.83
Customer activo wledges carrier delivered goods:
6/7/2017
Customer Signature Date
Carry Signature

APPENDIX O

Adam's Moving Service 17355 1st Ave NW Shoreline, WA 98177 Phone: (206) 251-1725

UTC Permit # HG 62045

Uniform Household Goods Bill of Lading

Customer: This bill of lading establishes a contract between you and Adam's Moving. It confirms instructions and authorizes the carrier to move, pack, store, and/or perform services shown. Before you sign this document it is important that you first read the document, including the back, and that you ask for an explanation of anything that is not clear or is different from: any previous information received from the carrier or and that you ask for an explanation of anything that is not clear or is different from: any previous information received from the carrier or any previous information received from the carrier or any previous information received from the carrier or any previous information received from the carrier to move, pack, store, and/or perform services shown in the pack.

nd that you ask for an explanation of anything arrier's representatives. This contract is subject	that is not clear or is different to conditions on the back of	t from:any:previous.Informatio this:form.	n received from the carrier or
Customer Arlew Nelson Phone 201, 272 3766 Email		Special Notes	
Origin Address: Morey Tsland, VA Additional Stops:	Destination / Additional No.	Seattle L).
LOSS AND DAMAGE PROTEC Customer must initial one option. Basic Value Protection I release to pound for the net weight of the lost or damaged item, Replacement Cost Coverage wiles the \$300 deductible), or replace the lost or damage than each individual article. This level of soverage cost Declared Value of Shipment	his shipment to a value of 60 cents, regardless of the actual value of th with Deductible We will rep ged article for any amount over the	re jiem. " <u>Most economical, Lov</u> pair the damage to your satisfaction \$300 deductible. The \$300 deduct	, pay you for the lost or damaged articles
Valuation Premium Replacement Cost Coverage v ross, or replace lost or damaged articles. This level of pa Declared Value of Shipment Valuation Premium	with no Deductible We we resection costs \$1.40 per \$100 of ye	vill repair damage to your satisfaction our declared walne of the entire ship	m, reimburse you for the replacement ment.
Written Estimate Release:(mix Am I waive my right to have Adam's I have received a non-binding est	Moving Service provide m	e with a written estimate	A GE
Customer Release: I have read a terms and conditions of this contract. X Crean Melson Signature of Customer Hourly Rated Moves	nd understand this contract C 17 13 Sign	11/1	goods to the carrier subject to the
Date Trucks Personnel	Travel Arrive	Depart Total Hrs.	Rate Charges 13 ⁵ 1046.25
Additional Charges: 4 mul 5 mul paper Customer acknowledges car	\$16 \$59. Frier delivered goo	15 ds:	Totals: 1105.38
Customer Signature	~	(17/13) Date	

APPENDIX P

From: Adams Moving Service
To: Paul. Susie (UTC)
Subject: Re: Introduction emails

Date: Thursday, October 24, 2013 9:25:15 AM

Thank you for your email, and for considering Adam's Moving Service for your upcoming move. We all take pride in our strong reputation in the Seattle community and strive to make every moving experience the absolute best for you!

We are available on XXXXX to schedule a move.

As far as a crew size, here are 2 options that may work out the best.

2 movers and our 20ft truck:

- \$95.00 per hour, 2 hour minimum
- · round trip travel time is billed from our North Seattle Location at our hourly rate

3 movers and our 20ft truck:

- · \$135.00 per hour, 2 hour minimum
- · round trip travel time is billed from our North Seattle Location at our hourly rate

We pro rate time on the quarter hour. Do you have any questions about our billing practices?

Payment:

We collect payment upon completion of your move. We accept cash, check and all major credit cards.

Cash: 3% discount

Credit/Debit: 3% fee

Along with other equipment, our trucks come equipped with several dozen thick, double quilted furniture pads to protect your items while they are in our care.

We are located on 135th and Aurora.

If you can provide a list of the furniture and an estimate of the number of boxes, I can help you decide on the level of service and give you a ballpark on time/cost.

Here is a link to my rates page that covers other options for levels of service, payment and insurance options.

http://www.adamsmovingservice.com/rates

Here is a link to my moving hints page that can provide you with tips on saving time and

APPENDIX P (continued)

money on your upcoming move.

http://www.adamsmovingservice.com/tips

If you have any questions, please let me know how I can be of assistance. Thank you again for the opportunity to earn your business. If you would like to set up an appointment, please feel free to call or email at your earliest opportunity.

__

Thank you,

Adam French, owner

www.adamsmovingservice.com

adam@adamsmovingservice.com

206-251-1725

Please note: At the time of this email, I have stated our current availability. We book jobs on a first come, first serve basis. This email is not a confirmation for our moving services, but an introduction email to begin the quote process.

Thank you,

Adam French, Owner www.adamsmovingservice.com adamsmoving1@gmail.com 206-251-1725

Please leave us a review!

https://plus.google.com/114195444103753665973/about?hl=en

APPENDIX Q

Adam's Moving Service



SERVING Seattle & Western Washington.



130 NE 95th St., Seattle WA 98155 9am - 5pm Mon-Sun



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU MOVE?

- Local and Long Distance Moving
- Furniture Pickup and Delivery
- Truck Loading and Unloading
- Efficient and Extremely Careful
- Licensed and Fully Insured Movers
- Hundreds of Satisfied Customers
- Seattle Movers For Over 8 Years!



SEATTLE MOVERS

Customer satisfaction and quality work are our top priorities. We have helped hundreds and hundreds of satisfied customers move around the Seattle area. We strive to make your move with us the absolute best moving experience ever.



- Residential Moving Commercial Moving Furniture deliver

Square footage: CUSTOMER SATISFACTION "My move this weekend was successful, your team Add The Totiv and professional. But they an that. They worked so quickly and efficiently, wasted no time at all. Flight of stairs: on of this interaction Square footage: Googles: yelp:

GET SulphitOTE

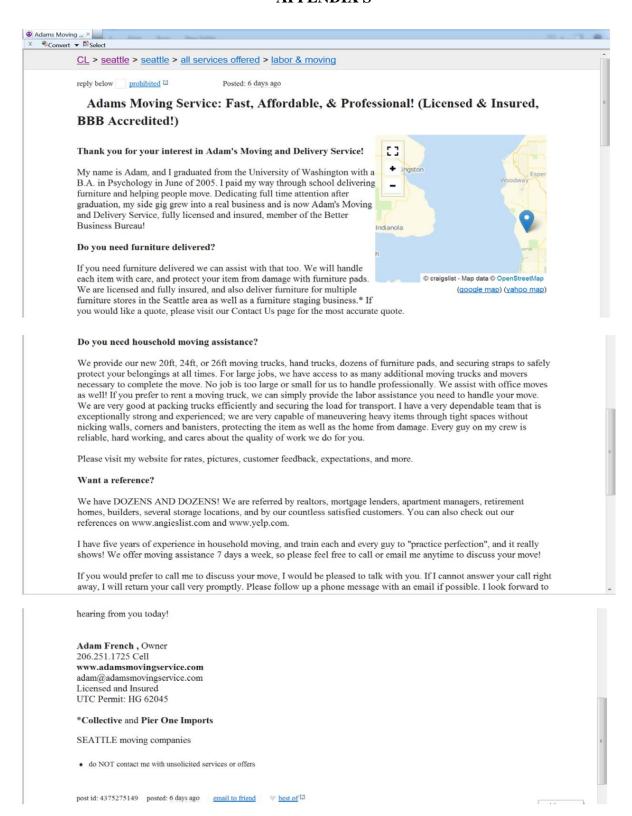
Manager of the Manager of the Manager.

http://www.adamsmovingservice.com/[9/20/2013 9:21:57 AM]

APPENDIX R

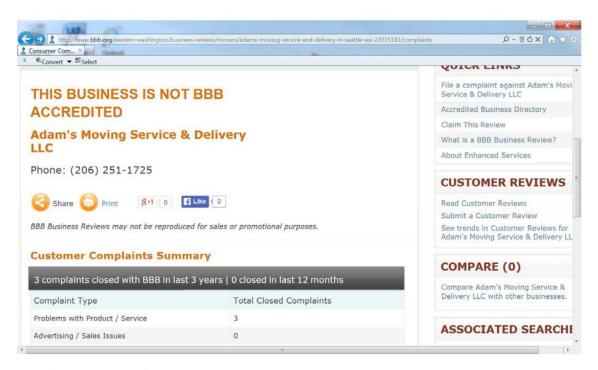


APPENDIX S



Mar. 20, 2014 Craigslist Ad – Still does not advertise with full name/has not applied for a DBA

APPENDIX T



March 20, 2014 BBB website -

APPENDIX U

Activity L	Og Case Na	me: Adam's Moving and Delive	ery Service, LLC
Agency Rep:	Lynda Holloway	Time of Activity:	08/10/2012 08:32 PM
Type of Activity:	Phone		
Other Party:	Adam French		Agency RepOther Party

Body:

Spoke with Adam and asked if he had put the correct signage on the driver and passenter doors of his moving trucks yet. He said he did. I asked if he had changed the valuation section on his web-site to say if the customer doesn't make a choice they would automically receive Replacement Cost Coverage, with deductible, not the Basic Value Protection. He said he he would have his web-designer do it immediately. Told him he may also want to take the word insures off of the last paragraph. He said he would do that also. Told him I would be closing his techical assistance filing.