

A Purr-fect Move?

SAFEPET TRANSPORT TAKES THE WORRY OUT OF RELOCATING FURRY FAMILY MEMBERS



John Underfer, founder of SafePet Transport, keeps someone's furry family member in caring hands.

A corporate relocation can be very stressful, not only for the executive making the move, but for all the family members—including the furry ones. Although the HR department's relocation specialist is likely to be very efficient in arranging the move of personal belongings, what about the animals? Most companies don't want their C-level executives spending the time it would take to drive cross-country to personally transport their pets to the new location. And thus, they fly—leaving their family pets to make the trip in the cargo hold of the airplane or in a van with unfamiliar animals.

That's where SafePet Transport comes to the rescue. The Wyckoff, N.J.-based company specializes in the safest, most direct customized transport of pets by land, in luxury vehicles. Launched in February 2015, the company exceeded its projections for 2015 by 25 percent within the first six months.

What makes SafePet unique to the pet transport industry is its highly trained Pet Pals, a corps of experienced, caring and accredited (pet CPR

and first aid-certified) companions who are assigned to a single family and its pet(s) for the duration of the trip.

The Pet Pal picks up the pet at the family's current location, takes it to the new location to coincide with the family's arrival, and is with the pet at all times. SafePet utilizes the latest in tracking and monitoring technology, including Tagg pet geotrackers, so owners can stay apprised of their pets' whereabouts and activities throughout the journey.

"Pets are integral members of the family; they're not cargo," said John Underfer, the company's founder and president. "What we are providing is peace of mind—at an exceptional level—for people going through the emotional, physical and psychological impact of relocation. We tailor our services to each customer's needs and wishes so that owners and pets alike receive the greatest possible comfort level, from planning to delivery. As evidence of our commitment to professionalism and the safety, health and comfort of all animals in our care, SafePet is a certified member of the International Pet and Animal Transportation Association."

According to Underfer, who has worked in the corporate relocation industry for years, transferees who were nervous about being separated from their pets began asking their companies for land service rather than flying to their new homes, and would often request the use of an SUV so that they could drive their pets personally. But for a corporate executive, making a cross-country drive translates to a tremendous loss in time and productivity. So the concept behind SafePet Transport was to offer a premier "companion service" that would free pet owners from this facet of their stress.



"When you have pets, they are like your kids," said a representative at an international financial services firm. "The idea that the pet isn't being dropped off by someone, sitting on the tarmac, waiting to be put in the hold of an airplane ... this kind of thing traumatizes an animal, I think. All our employees are rating SafePet top-of-the-line. Everyone is very happy with the service."

Once a SafePet transfer begins, the animals are always in the company of their personal Pet Pal—they stay at pet-friendly hotels. The Pet Pal is accessible to the owner/family 24 hours a day throughout the trip and communicates regularly via text, email and phone about the pet's activities and well-being, including exercise regimen, feeding times, sleep patterns and any additional observations, along with photos.

Underfer said the arrival of the pet is always coordinated with the arrival of the family or executive. It is rare that a pet will arrive before the family, but should it happen, the Pet Pal stays with the pet until he or she can safely deliver the pet into the waiting arms of its family. Although SafePet does provide services at other levels, including air travel and "standard" transport, they prefer companion transport because it is safer for the pet, and there is less emotional impact to add to what is already a stressful situation without its family.

Currently, SafePet provides services within the contiguous United States. For more information call 201-425-0415 or email inquiries@safepettransport.com. ■