Questions to ask an estate sale company

Ask every company the same questions, in the same order, so their answers compare fairly. Written for families in Bell County, Texas.

Experience

- [ ] How many sales have you run in this area in the past year?
- [ ] Have you run sales in homes like this one (size, contents, neighborhood rules)?
- [ ] Who will be at the house on sale days, and who is in charge?
- [ ] May I speak with two families you worked for recently?

Money

- [ ] What is your commission, and on what total is it calculated?
- [ ] Is there a minimum fee, or a minimum size of sale you take?
- [ ] What other fees apply: labor, advertising, card processing, haul-away?
- [ ] When and how will I be paid after the sale?
- [ ] What will the final statement show?

The house

- [ ] What should the family remove before you start?
- [ ] Who holds keys during setup, and can family visit once pricing begins?
- [ ] What happens if we take out an item after it is priced?
- [ ] How do you handle valuables, papers and medications you find?
- [ ] What happens to items that do not sell, and who pays for removal?

Paperwork

- [ ] Will you put the commission, every fee and the dates in a written agreement?
- [ ] If you mention insurance, bonding or credentials, can I see the documents?
- [ ] If an appraisal is needed for insurance, taxes or probate, who would do it?

When you call a company, say: “Joel from Fairhaven Design sent me.”