

Good News From the Doctor



Lost, Misplaced, Missing, Stolen, or Damaged Freight

We wish to once again discuss the subject of freight and the lack of it.

All factories (including those of our competitors) ship their products "F.O.B. Shipping Point," "F.O.B. Factory," or some other similar term.

"F.O.B." has nothing to do with who pays the freight! It is a term invented by the guys with the white powdered wigs to determine who is responsible for the love and care of the merchandise while it is gently rolling down the highway.

All our quotes contain the wording "F.O.B. Factory" or "F.O.B. Factory, Freight Collect," or as a courtesy to you, "F.O.B. Factory, Freight Prepaid to Job Site." Because the freight is "Prepaid", it does not shift the responsibility of damage away from the carrier.

The fact is when the manufacturer kicks it off the loading dock and onto the truck, the carrier accepts it and signs for it as being:

1. Undamaged
2. Correct carton count
3. Packed in substantial cartons

Then, the manufacturer's responsibility ends and the carrier's begins in-so-far-as delivering to you your merchandise:

1. Undamaged
2. Carton count as listed on the Bill of Lading

Now, when the carrier pulls up to your dock (or your job site), it is your (or your employee's) responsibility to:

1. Check the cartons immediately for dings, dents and other obvious damage
2. The correct number of cartons

If, in the "unlikely" event that something is amuck, then you have to:

1. Note your unhappiness on the Bill of Lading, and
2. Immediately notify the carrier in writing of the disorder.

You must then:

1. Decide if you can fix what is broken or fabricate what is missing and collect your money from the truck company, or
2. Re-order the material and collect your money from the truck company.

Please note that the truck companies have devised a zillion reasons why they claim they are not responsible, however, these reasons are strictly "old wives tales" and are simply not true. The fact of the matter is if they accepted it as correct count and in correct cartons, it's their responsibility to deliver it to you in the same manner.

In certain cases, you have fifteen (15) days to open your cartons and check for either:

1. Concealed damage
2. Missing or incorrect items

The concealed damage is the responsibility of the truck company and you have to immediately notify them in writing of your unhappiness.

Also, be aware that if the shipper ships you twenty (20) cartons and you receive twenty (20) undamaged cartons and you sign for them as "OK," only to find out three months later that four (4) of them belonged to Joe Snort Sheet Metal in Any Town, Idaho and you are indeed missing four (4) cartons of your own merchandise, well guess who is then responsible? Please make sure that all merchandise received is addressed to you. When you sign for it, you have notified the whole world that everything is OK and replacement cost will be your responsibility.

Also, no carrier will accept a product unless it is properly cartoned. If you receive a shipment that is uncartoned and rolling around loose in the bottom of the truck, you can bet that something is either missing or damaged and you should either:

1. Refuse the shipment, or
2. Inventory the shipment, piece by piece, and list each item on the Bill of Lading, or
3. Before you accept the shipment, call the sales associate that sold you the material and have them read you an itemized list of material so you can compare it to what is being dumped on you.

Please notify the person (or persons) in your organization that is (are) responsible for accepting freight concerning this information. It will keep the liability on the person who is responsible and not let it be pushed off on innocent bystanders.

"Good news from the Doctor" is an occasionally written letter based on "Bad News" experiences we have encountered while trying to earn the groceries. This letter is intended to make you aware of certain pitfalls we have already enjoyed and recommend that you perform your own research and draw your own conclusions so you won't blame us if it doesn't work! Be aware that your school days education is the cheapest education you'll ever get!