

Shipping & Drayage—Frequently Asked Questions

What is “drayage” or “material handling?”

Drayage/material handling is the moving of materials. Drayage/material handling also includes the storage of your materials for up to 30 days prior to the event, and/or storage of empty crates and boxes and the returning of the crates and boxes to your booth at the event. You may send your materials to either the advance receiving warehouse, or directly to show site. Either way, your materials need to get to your booth after they are dropped off at the loading dock and returned to the loading dock, and loaded onto your preferred carrier. Advanced shipping to the warehouse includes moving the materials from your carrier, into the warehouse, back on to a truck, transporting to the event location, unloading and transporting the materials to your booth.

How are drayage rates determined?

The loading docks in most major cities are controlled by union labor. Union labor rates vary from city to city. The union regulations and rates, combined with the weight of your materials and the time at which the shipment is received or moved out, and the costs associated with managing this function of the event, combine to determine drayage rates.

Why is shipping in advance desirable rather than shipping to show site?

Shipping in advance allows you to confirm receipt of your shipment before the show. Also, materials sent to the warehouse are unloaded prior to exhibitor move in. Onsite freight is not guaranteed to be unloaded upon arrival of the truck. A truck that arrives at 3pm may not be unloaded until 5pm due to other trucks in front of it or venue shipments which take precedence. You run the risk of overtime drayage charges and not having your materials in your booth when you arrive to set up.

What can I carry into my booth?

The general rule is that you can bring in yourself, whatever you can carry in one trip. You cannot use the loading dock or assistance from union labor, or hotel/venue personnel.

Money Saving Tips:

- Pay attention to deadline dates to avoid surcharges and/or overtime charges.
- Package and send your materials in ONE shipment to take advantage of the drayage minimum. Every shipment is based on the drayage minimum of 200lbs, therefore 3 shipments of 50 pounds each will be charged 3 x the minimum.
- Crates and pallets require less actual handling to load and unload and are therefore charged less than loose shipments of boxes. Shrink wrapping your materials onto a pallet also ensures that your shipment stays together.

Outbound Shipping Information

- Schedule your outbound pickup for the appropriate time.
- Prepay your shipment with your preferred carrier.
- Settle your show invoice with the decorator.
- Fill out the “official show” bill of lading and return to the decorator.
- A bill of lading is required for every different destination that you are sending to.
- Fed-Ex, UPS, DHL and other overnight carriers do not pick up at the freight dock. You must arrange your overnight shipments via the business center. If handled through the business center, these types of shipments do not require an official decorator bill of lading.
- If you have any questions on shipping out, consult the decorator before the show closes.