

MailPro

NEWS FOR MAILING PROFESSIONALS

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE • VOLUME 2 NUMBER 5 • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2008



NATIONAL PCC DAY:

FOCUS ON GROWTH
OPPORTUNITIES *PAGE 3*



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: HOLIDAY MAILING GUIDE

OPTIONAL APPLICATION PROCESS FOR NONPROFIT STANDARD MAIL AUTHORIZATION NOW AVAILABLE

FYI

Is your company looking for ways to save? Go to rethinkyourshipping.com.

Customers now can use *PostalOne!* to apply for Nonprofit Standard Mail authorizations and update existing records, as well as prepare and submit postage statements, pay postage, view account history, track deposits and check account balances.

Benefits to nonprofit organizations include:

- One national authorization number. No need to apply for authorization at additional or new mailing offices.
- Online application process. This speeds the application, review and approval process.
- Online access to records. Organizations can make instant changes to general information.

Organizations are still required to have a valid mailing permit and annual mailing fee paid at each mailing office.

To obtain an initial authorization, an official of

the nonprofit organization completes Form 3624, *Application to Mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail Prices*, online through *PostalOne!* Follow the prompts under *Submit a Form*.

When an organization wishes to mail at a Post Office other than the one where it received its original nationwide authorization, choose Form 3623, *Request for Confirmation of Authorization (or Pending Application) to Mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail Prices*.

Interested nonprofit organizations that do not already have *PostalOne!* access must first register by contacting their local Post Office or business mail entry unit and completing Form 1357-C, *Customer Request for Web Access*. The form is available at usps.com/forms/allforms.htm and can be easily downloaded and completed manually.

For additional information contact the Post Office where you enter your mail. ■

PREMIUM FORWARDING SERVICE IS NOW IN PEAK SEASON

Are you a high-mileage business executive with one or more extended trips each year? Are you a traveler planning to spend your winter in a warm climate? Do you have or know a college student, off to pursue academic adventures in another city or across the country? Then you should check out Premium Forwarding Service (PFS) from the Postal Service. It lets you take your residential mail with you when you travel.

Anyone who is going to be away from home for at least two weeks, or for as long as one year, is eligible to sign up for PFS. We take the mail sent to your permanent residential address and reship it to your temporary address by Priority Mail once a week. You pay a one-time enrollment fee of \$10, and a weekly reshipment fee of \$11.95.

PFS offers a lot of advantages for customers who will be gone for extended periods of time.

- Your permanent address does not change, and your temporary address is not provided to mailers.
- You won't miss important mail while you are away from home.
- You won't have to impose on neighbors or loved ones to pick up your mail.

- You can continue to enjoy your magazine and newspaper subscriptions while residing at your temporary address.

Accountable mail items requiring a signature — Express Mail, Certified Mail or Registered Mail — are sent ahead separately whenever they arrive rather than included in the weekly mailing. Some larger items are shipped separately with postage due for the mail class under which they were originally sent.

To get more information about PFS, go online to usps.com/receive/premiumforwarding or ask at your local Post Office. ■

COVER PHOTO:

Postmaster General John Potter and Vice President Business Customer Relations Susan Plonkey at National PCC Day event in St. Louis.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3 NATIONAL PCC DAY
- 4 HOLIDAY MAILING GUIDE
- 7 INTERNATIONAL MAIL OPTIONS
- 8 ADDRESSING STANDARDS
- 9 HOLIDAY MAILING DATES
- 10 CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN
- 11 CRITICAL ENTRY TIMES
- 12 NCOA ^{Link}

This newsletter is published bimonthly at no charge for mailing professionals. It contains information on current Postal Service programs and services, rates and classification, mailing success stories and industry news. To request *MailPro*, or to change your mailing address (include current mailing label), mail, fax or e-mail your name, title, company name, delivery address and daytime phone number to:

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PMG: "WE HAVE TO APPROACH THE BUSINESS IN A WHOLE NEW WAY"

FYI

The Postal Service has launched the first official postal blog at 2blogPCC.com. Customers can discuss important topics facing the mailing industry, access the latest information and provide feedback.

Postmaster General John Potter has cautioned mailers about the severity of the current economic climate and urged them to create new growth opportunities.

In remarks during National Postal Customer Council Day Sept. 17, Potter cited fluctuating oil prices, inflation in paper prices and the strife in the financial markets. He described challenging economic conditions as the most difficult time since the 1960s. The additional move of hardcopy messages to the Internet and questions about mail's environmental impact have led to a volume decline of 9 billion pieces this year.

Despite the tough times, Potter called on the mailing industry to seek new sources of growth.

"We have to approach the business in a whole new way," Potter said. "We have to develop new ways for the American people and American business to use the mail."

Potter said he remains confident in the strength and commitment of the Postal Service and the mailing industry as a whole.

"Once the economic storm passes, our industry will rebound," Potter said. "If we remain focused on the fundamentals of our industry and if we reach out to new audiences, we will again reach new heights."

One of these goals is to continue to improve record-setting levels of service. Working with the mailing industry and the Postal Regulatory Commission, the Postal Service has developed a new set of modern service standards for each class of mail and will begin measuring performance against these standards this year. In addition, improvements in customer satisfaction, scan rates, network effectiveness and the Postal Service's website, usps.com, will be top priorities moving forward, Potter said.

"Service is what we're all about. It is our franchise, the very reason for our existence," he said.

Potter also called on the mailing industry to adapt to the changing marketplace and invest in the future. The Intelligent Mail® barcode is one way the Postal Service is leveraging technology to provide greater value and ease to business mailers, he said. Storing three times the amount of data of current barcodes, the Intelligent Mail barcode helps customers manage mail flow by uniquely identifying every piece in a mailing. The technology allows mailers to sort, track and receive address correction, all from one barcode.

Affordable prices that deliver value are a key element to retain and grow business, Potter said. The agency has reduced costs \$1 billion or more for each of the past seven years and, through creative business solutions, absorbed the \$700 million rise in fuel costs last year so that these costs were not passed on to



Customers at National PCC Day event in Napa, CA.

customers as fuel surcharges.

"The price you see is the price you pay," Potter said.

Reduction in costs alone will not be enough to overcome difficult economic times, he said, identifying several opportunities for growth through innovative new products, including a new Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box and using the mail for recycling and product take-back programs. ■

The Postal Customer Council is a network of community-based business mailers and representatives of the Postal Service. PCCs work to improve service and communications.

National PCC Day showcases the work of PCCs and includes a series of awards recognizing outstanding service and individual achievement. The following award winners were announced:

- PCC Industry Member of the Year: Peggy Smith, Co-Chair, Greater St. Louis.
- PCC Postal Service Member of the Year: Victor Laudisio, Customer Relations Coordinator, Buffalo/Niagara.
- PCC of the Year: A tie! Buffalo/Niagara and Greater New York (large market) and Capital Region (Albany) (small market).
- PCC District Manager of the Year: Charles Howe, Greater Michigan District.
- Communication Program Excellence: Greater New York and Capital Region (Albany) (gold), Buffalo/Niagara and Greater Dallas (silver) and Fort Worth and West Michigan (bronze).
- Education Program Excellence: Capital Region (Albany) and Greater New York (gold), Buffalo/Niagara and Greater Atlanta (silver) and Greater Cleveland (bronze).

More information on Postal Customer Councils and National PCC Day can be found at usps.com/pcc.

FYI

Complete domestic and international pricing information is available at usps.com/prices.

It's here: The holiday mailing season — especially for international mail and mail to overseas military destinations. To assist you in preparing your holiday shipments, here are some tips and suggestions as you prepare to mail your holiday cards and packages. Careful preparation of holiday mailings will ensure safe and timely delivery.

TIPS FOR PACKAGING GIFTS

First, choose a box that's suitable for the contents and weight of the items you're shipping. Also, when selecting boxes, don't ship small, lightweight items in large boxes — practice "right-size" shipping. For example, if you send a pair of shoes in a shoebox, you'll pay a lot less than if you send them in a copy paper box, even though the contents weigh the same. This helps you avoid possible surcharges for oversized packaging. Sturdy paperboard or corrugated fiberboard boxes are best for weights up to 10 pounds.

Flat-rate shipping is the best value in the marketplace. Our Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes give customers the ability to send items across the country, with a flat predetermined price, regardless of how much they weigh or how far they're going.

— Postmaster General John Potter

Remember, an individual item that is not fragile requires less cushioning material around the contents and sometimes a "snug-fitting" box is all that's needed. If you're reusing an ordinary box, don't forget to cover all previous labels and markings with adhesive labels or remove them prior to mailing. Boxes, padded mailing bags and tubes of various sizes are available for purchase at most Post Offices.

For added convenience, use our Priority Mail and Express Mail complimentary packaging available in a variety of sizes at your local Post Office, online at usps.com or place an order by phone at 800-222-1811. Priority Mail packaging is sized so that it's never subject to minimum balloon price or dimensional-weight pricing. For outstanding value and convenience, use our Priority Mail Regular Flat Rate Boxes, available in two shapes, and the Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box. For one price, ship to any domestic destination, so there's no weighing or calculating postage.

Next, place the appropriate amount of cushioning, based on the contents, around your items. Use newspaper, Styrofoam "peanuts," bubble wrap or shredded paper. If there are multiple items in the box, close and shake the box to determine if there's enough cushioning for the contents. If you hear items shifting, add more cushioning. Remember, when packaging more than one item, wrap each item separately. Fragile articles need suitable separations from each other as well as sufficient clearance from the corners and sides of the box.

Don't forget to remove batteries from toys and electronic devices. Wrap them separately and place next to the item in the mailing container. Be sure to place an address label with the return and delivery addresses inside the box to ensure that the item can be delivered in case the outside address label becomes damaged or detached from the box.

Note: Customs forms are required on Priority Mail articles weighing 16 ounces or more sent to and from ZIP Codes with prefix 969 and ZIP Code 96799 (Guam and American Samoa, respectively) as well as to all APO/FPO destinations.

PROPER SEALING

Always tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with tape that's designed for shipping. Use clear or brown packaging tape at least 2 inches wide, reinforced packing tape or paper tape. Do not use masking or cellophane tape, cord, string or twine. Various retail outlets, in addition to Post Offices, now carry USPS-approved packaging materials. Remember: Priority Mail tape is for identification purposes only and is not intended to seal packages.

DELIVERY ADDRESS

Type or print the delivery address once, parallel to the longest side of the package, using a pen or permanent marker so the address is legible from an arm's length away. Always include complete street address information, such as AVE, BLVD or ST, as well as directionals such as N, W or SW. Also, always include apartment or suite number, when appropriate. Place a strip of clear packaging tape over your address label to prevent the address from smearing.

CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE

To find the correct spelling of a city name and correct state abbreviation, and to locate ZIP Code information, go to usps.com and click *Find a ZIP Code*. On the results page, you'll also see convenient links to our price calculator and Click-N-Ship.

RETURN ADDRESS

The complete address of the sender, including the ZIP Code of the return address, must be in the upper left corner of the address side of the mailpiece. Only one return address can be used and it must be located so that it does not affect either the clarity of the destination address or the application of service labels and notations, such as postmarks.

INSURANCE

Insured mail service purchased at a retail Post Office provides up to \$5,000 indemnity coverage, and insured mail service purchased online provides up to \$500 indemnity coverage. Items, however, may not be insured for more than their current value. All insured items are numbered, barcoded and receive a delivery scan. For those items insured for more than \$200, a signature also is obtained upon delivery. Tracking information is available only on those insured mail items sent with Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation service through the Delivery Confirmation or Signature Confirmation number (not the insured number). Remember to save your insured mail receipt. The Post Office does not maintain mailing records for insured items.

POSTAGE

Place the postage on the same side as the delivery address to the upper right of the address. Calculate prices for domestic and international mail and purchase lower commercial price postage with shipping labels online at usps.com, under *Print Postage*. Insurance up to \$500 may also be purchased using Click-N-Ship. And remember, with Click-N-Ship, Delivery Confirmation service is available at no additional charge when you print Priority Mail labels. Or, to avoid waiting in line at your Post Office, use our Automated Postal Centers (APCs) available in many Post Office lobbies.

CARRIER PICKUP

This service is free, regardless of the number of packages you're sending. Packages must be ready for shipment with postage applied using Click-N-Ship, PC Postage or postage meter, before your carrier arrives. Your carrier can pick up your packages when your regular mail is delivered. Schedule a pickup at usps.com/pickup.

Carrier Pickup now includes returns as well, when using Parcel Return Service (PRS) or Merchandise Return Service (MRS) labels. See the related article on page 11.

GREETING CARDS AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL ITEMS

Greeting cards are available in various shapes and

weights and include "musical" cards. Many of these cards weigh more than 1 ounce and, if the card appears to be square in shape, it may be subject to the 20-cent nonmachinable surcharge in addition to the applicable letter-size First-Class Mail postage. Usually the envelopes for such cards are marked "extra postage required." Additionally, some invitations or other items may also be subject to the nonmachinable surcharge. For greeting cards going directly to overseas destinations, see "First-Class Mail International," on page 7.

The First-Class Mail nonmachinable surcharge applies to all letters up to 3.5 ounces. Due to their thickness, many of the musical greeting cards exceed letter-size standards and are classified and priced as flats (large envelopes). Mailpieces classified as postcards eligible for the postcard price, and flats and parcels, are never subject to the 20-cent nonmachinable surcharge.

To be eligible for the 27-cent First-Class Mail postcard price, postcards can be no larger than 6 inches long by 4-1/4 inches high, and no more than 0.016-inch thick.

PRIORITY MAIL – GET EXPEDITED DELIVERY OF YOUR PACKAGES FOR LESS

You can have delivery of packages in two or three days, including Saturday and residential

THIRTEEN-OUNCE MAIL RULE

Mailpieces that weigh more than 13 ounces and bearing ordinary postage stamps must be presented at a retail Post Office. You can use convenient online postage applications or an APC if you wish to mail items that weigh more than 13 ounces in Postal Service collection boxes or Post Office lobby mail slots, or if you wish to leave the items for pickup by your letter carrier. Online postage applications include the Postal Service's Click-N-Ship service on usps.com and PC Postage from an authorized USPS vendor. If you are unable to use one of the above methods to prepare and affix postage, items weighing more than 13 ounces must be presented for mailing to an employee at a retail Post Office. Decals have been placed on USPS collection boxes to indicate that deposit of stamped mail over 13 ounces is prohibited in collection boxes and any such mail will be returned to sender. This is part of ongoing security measures established by the Postal Service, in cooperation with other government agencies, to keep the public, customers, employees and the mail safe.

FYI

ZIP Code information as well as correct spellings of street and city names are just a click away at usps.com. Click *Find a ZIP Code*.

FYI

Priority Mail commercial prices are lower than Priority Mail prices a year ago.

deliveries at no extra charge, and delivery to Post Office box addresses as well. Low flat-rate shipping is also available with Priority Mail for any destination when you use our popular flat-rate boxes and envelope. There are two regular flat-rate box options and a large flat-rate box option.

PRIORITY MAIL PRICE COMPARISONS

	Retail	Commercial
Flat Rate Envelope	\$ 4.80	\$ 4.75
Regular Flat Rate Boxes	9.80	9.30
Large Flat Rate Box		
Domestic Addresses	12.95	12.50
APO/FPO destinations	10.95	10.50

COMMERCIAL PRICES

Priority Mail commercial prices are available to

any customers purchasing postage using Click-N-Ship, or with PC Postage when producing individual shipping labels. Commercial prices apply to postage only and not extra services such as insurance and Signature Confirmation. And remember, Priority Mail with postage paid using one of the above methods is also eligible for no-fee (electronic) Delivery Confirmation service.

EXPRESS MAIL — TWO OPTIONS NOW AVAILABLE

With Express Mail service, you get guaranteed overnight delivery to most locations or your money back. Delivery to most destinations is 365 days a year. You get tracking information and there are no Saturday or fuel surcharges. With the exception of the flat-rate envelope, Express Mail now has zone-based pricing based on weight and distance consistent with standard industry practices. Zone-based pricing results in lower prices for closer destinations, especially items weighing up to 15 pounds, out to zone 3 (within 300 miles).

Remember, there is a Sunday/holiday premium for Express Mail when delivery is requested on Sundays and holidays. The cost is \$12.50 per item in addition to the Express Mail postage.

Now you can have your Express Mail shipments held for up to five days at many of our Post Office locations to await pickup by recipients when it's convenient for them. Express Mail Hold for Pickup also includes an automated callback notification to senders about the arrival status of their package.

COMMERCIAL PRICES

Express Mail commercial prices are 3 percent below retail prices for all zone-based Express Mail and \$16 for the Express Mail Flat Rate Envelope. Commercial prices are available to any customers purchasing postage online using Click-N-Ship, PC Postage or an Express Mail Corporate Account. Commercial prices apply to postage only. □

INTERNATIONAL MAIL OPTIONS

International retail products consist of: Global Express Guaranteed (GXG), Express Mail International, Priority Mail International and First-Class Mail International, and are available for purchase at Post Offices as well as online at usps.com.

Available online tools make international mailing easier than ever, combining customs forms and address labels for many products shipped using the Internet. Online mailing is easier on the budget too, with lower commercial pricing available to any customers purchasing postage using Click-N-Ship, or with PC Postage when producing individual shipping labels, and for Express Mail International - Express Mail Corporate Account users.

Postage paid using one of the above methods can qualify for reductions of:

- 10 percent on GXG.
- 8 percent on Express Mail International.
- 5 percent on Priority Mail International.

The same USPS-provided Express Mail and Priority Mail packaging for domestic service can be used with International Mail as well. This includes our popular flat-rate options for Priority Mail International, including two regular flat-rate boxes, the large flat-rate box, the flat-rate envelope and the Express Mail Flat Rate Envelope. USPS products are priced lower than comparable services of other international carriers. Be sure to see "Addressing Standards and Customs Forms for International Mail" on page 8 in this issue of *MailPro*.

FIRST-CLASS MAIL INTERNATIONAL

This is a reliable and economical means of sending correspondence – greeting cards, letters and postcards – documents and lightweight merchandise weighing up to 4 pounds. Insured mail service is not available for First-Class Mail International. Registered Mail service is available.

Shaped-based pricing was introduced last May, aligning the First-Class Mail International price structure with First-Class Mail, and there are separate prices for letters, large envelopes (flats) and packages (small packets). The weight limit for letters is 3.5 ounces, and the weight limit for large envelopes and packages is 64 ounces. The 20-cent nonmachinable surcharge applies to all letters weighing up to 3.5 ounces. The nine country price groups are aligned with the price groups for Priority Mail International and Express Mail International. To identify a country's price group, go to pe.usps.com and click *International Prices and Fees*, then *Country Listing*.

PRIORITY MAIL INTERNATIONAL

Available to more than 190 countries, Priority Mail International service offers six to 10 average-business-day delivery and the same flat-rate packaging options



as Priority Mail. There are two regular flat-rate box options – \$23.95 for Canada and Mexico and \$38.95 for all other countries. There is also a large flat-rate box option – \$29.95 for Canada and Mexico and \$49.95 for all other countries. All flat-rate boxes have a 20-pound weight limit.

Limited indemnity coverage is included on Priority Mail International packages. Coverage is limited to the actual value of the contents or the maximum indemnity based on the weight of the mailpiece, whichever is less. Mailers can purchase insurance for packages being sent to many countries. When international insured service is purchased, it replaces the indemnity coverage provided on ordinary Priority Mail International packages.

EXPRESS MAIL INTERNATIONAL

Express Mail International provides reliable, three to five average-business-day delivery to more than 190 countries with money-back delivery guarantee to select destinations. Specific average-days-for-delivery information to major destinations is available through the online price calculator as well as at Post Offices. Insured service up to \$100 is provided at no additional cost. Additional insurance coverage above \$100 may be purchased at the mailer's option up to a maximum of \$5,000 per shipment, although limits vary by county. See the Individual Country Listing in the *International Mail Manual (IMM)* at pe.usps.com.

GLOBAL EXPRESS GUARANTEED

GXG provides reliable, high-speed, date-certain service with international transportation and delivery provided by FedEx Express in one to three business days to more than 190 countries with a money-back guarantee (some restrictions apply). Insurance up to \$100 per shipment is included. At the mailer's option, additional insurance may be purchased up to \$2,499 or as limited by destination country, content or value. See Publication 141, *Global Express Guaranteed Service Guide*, at usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub141.pdf. □

FYI

Click-N-Ship customers now have the option of printing two domestic labels on a single sheet of paper, saving on both paper and printing costs.

ADDRESSING STANDARDS AND CUSTOMS FORMS FOR INTERNATIONAL MAIL

FYI

usps.com has a new look — check it out at usps.com.

The complete delivery address must be typed or legibly written, with ink, in English — using all upper case Roman letters and Arabic numerals — and should appear lengthwise on only one side of the package. Except for Global Express Guaranteed (GXG), where the address must be completely written in English, an address in a foreign language is permitted only if the names of the city, province and country are also indicated in English. The last line of the address must include only the complete country name — no abbreviations — written in all uppercase letters. Foreign postal codes (numeric and alpha), if used, should be placed on the line immediately above the country name.

Some countries prefer that the postal code follow the name, while others prefer that it precede the city or town name. The following shows the order of information for the destination address:

MS. C. P. APPLE	MR. THOMAS CLARK
APARTADO 3068	117 RUSSELL DRIVE
46807 PUERTO VALLARTA	LONDON WIP 6HQ
JALISCO	ENGLAND
MEXICO	

Exception to Canada: There must be two spaces between the province abbreviation and the postal code, as shown below between “ON” and “K1A 0B1”:

MS. HELEN SAUNDERS
1010 CLEAR STREET
OTTAWA ON K1A 0B1
CANADA

RETURN ADDRESS

Many foreign postal administrations require that mailpieces contain complete sender and addressee information in Roman letters and Arabic numerals. Mailpieces that do not contain a return address may be returned by the foreign postal administration. The complete return address of the sender, including ZIP Code and country of origin, should be placed in the upper left corner of the address side of the package. Only one return address may be used and it must be located so that it does not affect either the clarity of the destination address or the application of customs forms and service labels and notations, such as postmarks. Packages bearing a return address of another country are accepted only at the sender's risk.

CUSTOMS FORMS

Customs forms are available without charge at Post Offices and through an online customs form application at usps.com/international/customs.htm. It's important to affix the correct completed customs form to your

international packages prior to mailing. Keep in mind that customs forms requirements vary by the type of mail. You are encouraged to obtain, read and complete the appropriate customs forms prior to mailing. Please be aware that packages with incomplete or missing customs forms may be returned by the foreign postal administration.

Note: Customs forms also are required on Priority Mail articles weighing 16 ounces or more sent to and from ZIP Codes with prefix 969 and ZIP Code 96799 (Guam and American Samoa, respectively), as well as to all APO/FPO destinations.

Here is a list of the customs forms requirements by type of international mail:

FIRST-CLASS MAIL INTERNATIONAL

Mailpieces weighing 16 ounces or more, and all potentially dutiable items regardless of their weight, require the applicable customs forms as follows:

- If the value of the contents is less than \$400, affix Form 2976 *Customs Declaration*, to the exterior of the package.
- If the value of the contents is \$400 or more, affix the upper white barcoded portion of Form 2976 to the exterior of the package and place a completed Form 2976-A, *Customs Declaration and Dispatch Note*, inside the package with the contents.

PRIORITY MAIL INTERNATIONAL PACKAGES

All packages must bear a completed Form 2976-A inserted into a pouch (Form 2976-E) and affixed to the exterior of the package.

PRIORITY MAIL FLAT RATE ENVELOPE

- If the value of the contents is less than \$400, affix Form 2976 to the exterior of the envelope.
- If the value of the contents is \$400 or more, affix the upper white barcoded portion of Form 2976 to the exterior of the envelope and place a completed Form 2976-A inside the envelope with the contents.

EXPRESS MAIL INTERNATIONAL

The customs form requirement varies by individual country. See the *International Mail Manual* (IMM) at pe.usps.com for additional details or consult your local Post Office.

GLOBAL EXPRESS GUARANTEED

For GXG mailings, Form 6182, *Commercial Invoice*, may be required and also serves as the customs form. Item 11FGG1, *GXG Air Way bill/Shipping Invoice*, or the online version must be used.

For more information, contact your local Post Office or see the online versions of the IMM and Publication 51, *International Postal Prices and Fees*, at pe.usps.com. □

2008 INTERNATIONAL AND MILITARY MAIL HOLIDAY MAILING DATES

FYI

Vision 2013, the Postal Service's new five-year plan, is available at usps.com, click *About USPS & News*.

To ensure delivery of holiday cards and packages by Dec. 25 to military APO and FPO addresses overseas and to international addresses, we suggest that mail be entered by the recommended mailing dates listed below. And don't forget you can print postage, labels and customs forms online 24/7 using Click-N-Ship service at usps.com/clicknship.

Remember, all mail addressed to military post offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation and handling. APO and FPO addresses require customs forms. To see a table of active APO and FPO destinations and mailing restrictions by individual APO/FPO ZIP Codes, go

to pe.usps.com and click *Postal Bulletins* in the blue navigation bar. Go to the current issue and see the article "Overseas Military Mail." □

Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box to APO/FPO addresses receives \$2 reduction

Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Boxes shipped to an APO/FPO destination receive a \$2 reduction. Either version of the large box – with or without the America Supports You logo – can receive the reduced price at retail or online. The two regular flat-rate boxes are not eligible for the military price reduction.

Military Mail Addressed To	Express Mail Military Service (EMMS) ¹	First-Class Mail Items	Priority Mail ²	Parcel Airlift (PAL) ³	Space Available Mail (SAM) ⁴	Parcel Post
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 090-092	Dec 18	Dec. 11	Dec. 11	Dec. 4	Nov. 28	Nov. 13
APO/FPO AE ZIP 093	N/A	Dec. 4	Dec. 4	Dec. 1	Nov. 21	Nov. 13
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 094-098	Dec 18	Dec. 11	Dec. 11	Dec. 4	Nov. 28	Nov. 13
APO/FPO AA ZIPs 340	Dec 18	Dec. 11	Dec. 11	Dec. 4	Nov. 28	Nov. 13
APO/FPO AP ZIPs 962-966	Dec 18	Dec. 11	Dec. 11	Dec. 4	Nov. 28	Nov. 13

1. EMMS is available to selected military post offices. Check with your local Post Office to determine if this service is available to your APO/FPO of address.

2. Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Boxes shipped to an APO/FPO destination receive a \$2 reduction, either version of the large box (with or without the America Supports You logo) can receive the reduced price at retail or online.

3. PAL is a service that provides air transportation for parcels on a

space-available basis. It is available for Parcel Post items not exceeding 30 pounds in weight and 60 inches in length and girth combined. The applicable PAL fee must be paid in addition to the regular surface price of postage for each addressed piece sent by PAL service.

4. SAM parcels are paid at Parcel Post prices with maximum weight and size limits of 15 pounds and 60 inches in length and girth combined. SAM parcels are first transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air on a space-available basis.

International Mail Addressed to	Global Express Guaranteed (GXG) ⁵	Express Mail International (EMS) ⁶	Priority Mail International (PMI) ⁷	First-Class Mail International
Africa	Dec. 19	Dec. 12	Dec. 4	Dec. 4
Asia/Pacific Rim	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec. 11
Australia/New Zealand	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec. 11
Canada	Dec. 20	Dec. 18	Dec. 11	Dec. 11
Caribbean	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec. 11
Central & South America	Dec. 19	Dec. 12	Dec. 4	Dec. 4
Mexico	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec. 11
Europe	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec 11
Middle East	Dec. 19	Dec. 17	Dec. 11	Dec 11

5. GXG is available to more than 190 countries through an alliance with FedEx Express. See a retail associate at participating locations for a complete list of countries and money-back guarantee details, or go to pe.usps.com, and click *International Prices and Fees*, then *Country Listing*. Some restrictions apply. Free shipping supplies are available. Purchase postage online and receive a 10 percent reduction.

6. EMS is available to more than 190 countries with delivery in three to five average business days. Guaranteed, money-back service is available to Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea (Republic of South). Flat-rate shipping options and free packaging are available. Purchase postage online and receive an 8 percent reduction.

7. PMI is available to more than 190 countries with delivery in six to 10 average business days. Flat-rate shipping options and free packaging are available. Purchase postage online and receive a 5 percent reduction.

*Average number of days may vary based on origin and destination.

To ensure delivery of holiday cards and packages to domestic addresses (except APO and FPO destinations) by Dec. 25, we suggest mailing no later than Dec. 20 for First-Class Mail and Priority Mail, and Dec. 23 for Express Mail.

POSTMASTER GENERAL KICKS OFF CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

FYI

More than 75 percent of all new light-duty postal vehicles can run on alternative fuels.

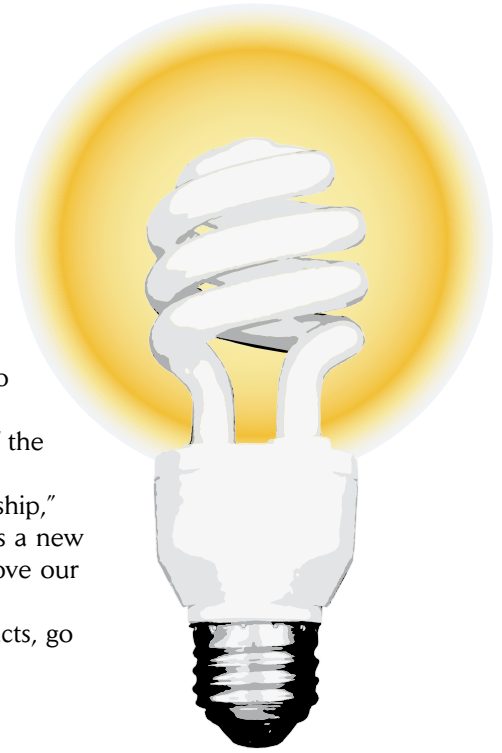
Unplug. Turn off lights. Close doors. Adjust thermostats. Report HVAC problems. Turn off unused equipment. Become personally responsible for conservation. These simple steps, taken collectively by the 685,000 employees at the U.S. Postal Service and throughout its 34,000 facilities, will have a dramatic impact on the environment.

That's the message from Postmaster General John Potter, launching a year-long campaign to increase awareness and create results for energy conservation. Recognizing October as National Energy Awareness Month, Potter called on employees, suppliers and partners in the mailing industry to increase efforts to "go green."

"We need to take whatever steps we can to meet the needs of the present without compromising the future," Potter said.

"We are building on a strong history of environmental stewardship," said Sam Pulcrano, vice president, Sustainability. "Every day brings a new challenge and a new opportunity to reduce our impact and improve our operations and systems."

For more information on green initiatives and consumer products, go to usps.com/green. ■



GREEN FACTS

- The Postal Service has the largest solar photovoltaic systems in the nation. Photovoltaics convert sunlight directly into electricity. The emissions eliminated by using solar power are equal to planting more than 850,000 trees.
- Detailed energy audits are ongoing at 500 of our largest energy-consuming buildings. These buildings represent approximately 120 million square feet of facility space (40 percent of all facilities) and approximately 60 percent of the Postal Service's energy consumption. More than 1 trillion BTUs of potential energy reductions already have been identified.
- Lighting and lighting controls in processing plants are being upgraded to include energy-efficient fluorescent lighting.
- Revisions to USPS standards allow for high-efficiency HVAC, lighting, roofs and windows whenever these systems need to be replaced in our 34,000 building inventory.
- A Utility Management System pilot project began earlier this year to capture consumption and cost data for electricity, natural gas and fuel oil. The pilot has successfully gathered bills for 600 sites and processed payments. The project provides greater visibility for cost and consumption information, allowing the Postal Service to better manage energy resources.
- The Postal Service is exploring or installing several energy saving systems in facilities around the country, including photovoltaic cells, solar panels, geo-thermal panels and even wind turbines.
- The Postal Service has used more than 1 million gallons of alternative fuel in its alternative fuel-capable vehicles and increased E85 fuel consumption by 40 percent.
- Mail is delivered by bicycle in Arizona and Florida, 2-ton electric vehicles have been delivering mail in New York City since 2004, and T3 three-wheel electric scooters are being tested as possible replacement for traditional gasoline delivery vehicles in Florida, California, Texas and Arizona.
- The three-year test of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles for delivery hit a milestone this year. Carriers in Washington, DC, and Irvine, CA, delivered more than 1.2 million pieces of mail using fuel-cell vans. Fuel economy was double that of conventional gasoline vehicles.

CRITICAL ENTRY TIMES

Every postal plant has an operating plan designed for mail processing operations to meet published service standards. Operating plans are combinations of processes and organizing principles that reflect the operational structure, strategy, processing goals and customer commitments of a postal facility. The facility uses its operating plan to process mail efficiently and move volumes from one operation to the next to meet its service standards.

While an operating plan includes several items, the critical entry time (CET) is particularly significant. CET is the latest time that a minimal amount of mail can be tendered to designated induction points in the postal network in order for it to be processed and dispatched to meet service standards.

Generally, the local plant determines CETs and defines specific times for each mail class in its operating plan. On July 1, a national postal policy established the CET for destination entry Standard Mail as 4 p.m. for drop shipments prepared on pallets or in other appro-

prate containers and 12 noon for bed-loaded trailers.

These national CETs were designed to support achievement of the service standards for Standard Mail drop-shipped by mailers to specific locations. All postal operating plans have been updated to reflect the national times for destination entry Standard Mail. There is no national CET for origin-entered Standard Mail.

While it does not affect the length of the service standard for Standard Mail, the national CET affects the start time for service performance. If the Postal Service receives a drop shipment before the national CET, the day of receipt is designated as the "arrival date." If the mailing is accepted after the CET, the mailing will have an arrival date of the following applicable processing day.

As long as the mailer arrives before the national CET and meets other elements required for mail acceptance and service measurement, service performance will start on the same day of the scheduled drop shipment appointment. ■

FYI

With Click-N-SHIP, Delivery Confirmation service is available at no additional charge when you print Priority Mail labels.

CARRIER PICKUP NOW INCLUDES RETURNS

The Carrier Pickup program has been expanded and now includes Merchandise Return Service (MRS) and Parcel Return Service (PRS) packages.

This expansion meets the need of merchants and shippers, as well as consumers, who value the convenience of using the Postal Service.

Customers now can use usps.com/pickup to schedule a pickup for MRS and PRS packages, as well as expedited — Express Mail and Priority Mail — and international packages. Customers can have any or all of the above picked up under the enhanced Carrier Pickup program.

Expanding Carrier Pickup provides convenience for merchants and consumers in various ways.

- **Returns.** As Internet shopping continues to grow, especially around the busy holiday season, consumers can request Carrier Pickup of items when merchants provide them with labels for MRS and PRS. Many more merchants provide downloadable return labels through their Internet sites.
- **Recycles.** People concerned about the environment will find it more convenient to recycle old cell phones, MP-3 players, ink-jet cartridges and other small electronic devices using these services.
- **Recalls.** Consumers can use Carrier Pickup in the event of a recall of products that meet the size and weight criteria for mailing when manufacturers provide MRS and PRS labels.
- **Repairs.** Consumers may have items that need to be sent to a facility for repair using MRS or PRS. The Postal Service is the only delivery service

that visits America's 146 million home and business addresses every day. Nobody in the industry can take a package out of the household as efficiently and effectively as we can. Our letter carriers leave their station with a full truck and they want to come back to their station with a full truck.

For additional information and to schedule a pickup, go to usps.com/pickup. ■



FYI

Explore postage payment options for business at usps.com/business/postagepayoptions.

NCOALink: THE PREMIUM PRE-MAILING

This is the fourth in a series of articles to help you understand and meet the new Move Update standards that go into effect for mailings entered after Nov. 22.

Move Update articles published earlier this year in *MailPro*:

- "Getting Ready for the New Move Update Standards" – January/February.
- "Are you Ready for Move Update?" (with FAQs) – May/June.
- "Move Update: Post-Mailing Methods" – July/August.

Previous issues of *MailPro* are available at usps.com/mailpro.

New Move Update processing changes:

- Increase the minimum frequency of all Move Update processing from 185 (calendar) days to 95 days prior to the date of mailing.
- Expand the Move Update standards from First-Class Mail automation and presort mailings to include all Standard Mail mailings.

The New Move Update standards mean that starting Nov. 23, mailers must begin using addresses on mailpieces that were updated within the previous 95 days of the mailing date.

For example, a mailing entered on Jan. 5, 2009, must bear addresses that were updated no earlier than Oct. 2, 2008. Eligible mailpieces

bearing an alternative address format such as "John Doe or Current Resident," "Occupant" or "Postal Customer," are not subject to the Move Update standards.

One of the best methods for Move Update processing prior to mailing is the National Change of Address Linkage System – or NCOALink.

NCOALink allows mailers to electronically process their mailing lists against the USPS National Change of Address database. NCOALink reduces undeliverable-as-addressed (UAA) mail by correcting input addresses in the file prior to mailing.

Using NCOALink prior to the mailing will help mailers avoid unnecessary production and postage costs for mail that may not be forwardable or that the mailer does not want to have forwarded. It also helps keep Postal Service processing costs down by eliminating forwarding and return-to-sender processing of UAA mail.

The NCOALink process consists of computer software purchased, leased or developed by the licensee to access NCOALink data. USPS certifies the process and licenses the NCOALink product to private sector companies for commercial mail list processing, or internal mail list management.

USPS provides updated, computerized change-of-address information on a weekly basis to NCOALink Full Service and Limited Service Provider licensees and monthly to End User licensees.

NCOALink PROCESSING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Almost five out of every 100 mailpieces are UAA. When you look at UAA mail by reason, approximately 75 percent is caused by people moving. In addition, when you look at UAA mail by class, Standard Mail accounts for almost 63 percent of all UAA mail volume.

There are three types of NCOALink licensing:

- Full Service licensee receives a 48-month COA database.
- Limited Service licensee receives an 18-month COA database.
- End User licensee receives 18-month COA data.

NCOALink Full Service and Limited Service licensees are required by their license agreement with USPS to acquire a Processing Acknowledgement Form (PAF) for each of their customers. The PAF is not a requirement for the End User licensee.

The PAF is an essential part of the NCOALink process because it enables USPS and the mailing industry to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 by way of a written request to use COA information for mailing purposes. Specifically, section 552a of Title 5 states in part:

"No agency shall disclose any record which is

MOVE UPDATE METHOD

The NCOALink process improves mailpiece deliverability by providing mailers with current, standardized, delivery point-coded addresses for individual, family and business moves.

New address information is obtained from COA orders filed by postal customers. If a match is made with the name and old address information in the NCOALink file, then the move information — new address or undeliverable status — is made available to update the address record.

The full NCOALink product contains approximately 160 million records or four years worth of COAs and is available to Full Service Provider licensees. The limited NCOALink product contains approximately 60 million records or 18 months worth of COAs and is available to Limited Service Provider and End User licensees.

In addition to COA information, NCOALink also utilizes return codes to provide explanations of match and non-match status:

- Return codes that indicate that a match was obtained are accompanied by a new address or undeliverable status such as moved, left no address, or no such number.
- Return codes that indicate a match was not obtained provide the reason a match could not be made to the NCOALink file.

The analysis of return codes can help mailers determine the deliverability of specific address records in their files.

NCOALink provides the following benefits:

- Reduces UAA mail and mailer's costs by providing the most current address information for matches made to the NCOALink file.
- Decreases "re-mailings" after address correction notices are received from a previous mailing, since the address correction is applied prior to the mailing.
- Provides the opportunity for faster product/service marketing through accurate mail delivery.

Why bother checking for accuracy of your address list? Accurate and updated addresses are required to obtain Automation and Presort prices for First-Class Mail and all Standard Mail prices after Nov. 23. Also, consider these statistics:

- 14 percent of Americans change addresses annually.
- 43 million people move each year.
- One out of every six families moves each year.

How many of these people are your customers or members?

When you buy or rent a list, make sure it was processed through Coding Accuracy Support System certified address-matching software and NCOALink within 95 days of your projected mailing dates. If you are not sure, ask the vendor.

Customers with questions regarding Move Update should contact the Post Office where they enter their mailings. To learn more about NCOALink and to see listings of NCOALink service providers, go to ribbs.usps.gov and click NCOALink in the left navigation bar. □

contained in a system of records by any means of communication to any person, or to another agency, except pursuant to a written request by, or with the prior written consent of, the individual to whom the record pertains..."

The NCOALink PAF:

- Identifies those mailers to whom USPS has disclosed change-of-address information via the use of NCOALink processing.
- Ensures mailers' acknowledgement use of the NCOALink data is restricted.
- May protect the NCOALink licensee if a mailer uses the processing results for reasons that abuse the intended use of the product such as creating a list of new movers.

The service provider licensee must acquire this form from each customer before they can

perform NCOALink processing. This form must be completed and signed by the mail list owner, the NCOALink licensee and, when applicable, any third parties that are a part of the transaction between the list owner and the licensee.

The PAF must be renewed annually and the NCOALink licensee must retain a copy for six years and must make it available to USPS upon request.

As the Postal Service expands automation to control costs and improve service, the importance of address quality increases. Reaching more recipients means more responses. Less UAA or returned mail can reduce costs significantly.

To view and print a sample PAF, go to ribbs.usps.gov/files/ncoalink, and click *FSP_INFO*, then *FSP_PAF_V3.DOC* or *FST_PAF_V3.PDF*, as appropriate. □

FYI

Print on both sides of the paper to save resources and reduce mailing costs.



If your shipping company charges you extra for fuel, then maybe it's time to rethink your shipping company.

Reliable overnight and 2-day shipping* is what your business will get when you ship with the U.S. Postal Service.®

What you won't get are additional surcharges for fuel, Saturday delivery,† or residential delivery.

Learn more and try our Surcharge Calculator at rethinkyourshipping.com

*2-day shipping to most U.S. destinations. Visit usps.com for details. †Except Express Mail® on Saturday national holidays.
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It's time to rethink your shipping.



FLATS SEQUENCING STRATEGY WEB PAGE

Check out our Flats Sequencing Strategy Web page at ribbs.usps.gov. You'll find all of our presentations, resources and a complete list of frequently asked questions related to the flats vision and the new Flats Sequencing System (FSS). Included is a scripted presentation and fact sheets on the new address standards for commercial flat-size mail.

We will update the page with new

information and materials as they become available.

From the RIBBS homepage, just click *Flats Sequencing Strategy – All Things FSS* in the center of the page. ■

In addition, see previous FSS articles in *MailPro*:

"Delivery Address Placement and Formatting for FSS Processing" – May/June 2008.

"Flats Sequencing System Moves Forward" – July/August 2008.

FIND AND PAY FOR A PO BOX ONLINE

It's a quick click to manage your PO Boxes online.

Customers can find, apply for and rent an available PO Box by going to usps.com/poboxes.

"Convenient products and services, easily accessible at times that

fit our customers' active, busy lifestyles. PO Boxes Online is one more way the Postal Service is responding to the needs of consumers and business owners," says David Shoenfeld, senior vice president of Mailing Services. ■

MAIL VOLUME DECLINES

As the current economic climate continues to contribute to a decrease in mail volume – and with no reversal in the trend in sight – the Postal Service expects to end the current fiscal year with a volume decline of 9 billion pieces.

The end-of-year financial results will be released in November.

Postmaster General John Potter says the magnitude of the loss in mail requires the Postal Service to take steps now to shore up its business, which it is doing by reducing work hours.

"While we deal with the economic challenges, customers and service to our customers will always be number one on our agenda, it is why we exist, it is our franchise," said Potter. ■

NEW U.S. CENSUS BUREAU REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PACKAGES

In the Sept. 25 *Postal Bulletin* we published new U.S. Census Bureau regulations for packages destined outside the United States. The new regulations affect all customers who ship international packages.

Effective Sept. 30, customers must display an alphanumeric code on their customs form when package contents are valued at more than \$2,500 (per Schedule B Export Codes) or require an export license under U.S. law. The alphanumeric code indicates that the customer or authorized agent

filed export information through the Census Bureau's Automated Export System (AES) or AESDirect website at aesdirect.gov prior to mailing. Export information filed on a printed commerce form 7525-V, *Shipper's Export Declaration (SED)*, is no longer acceptable.

For help with electronic filing, please refer to the Census Bureau's website at census.gov/foreign-trade/aes or call 1-800-549-0595.

The Postal Service cannot file on behalf of customers. ■

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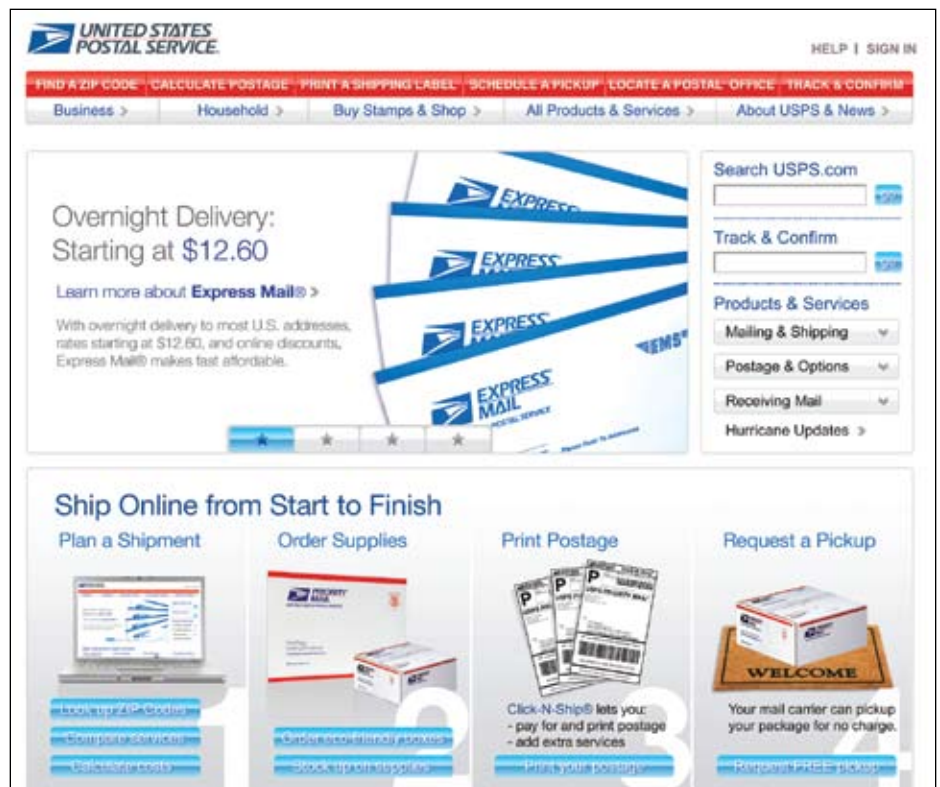
More than 31 million ballots are expected to be mailed this fall.

GIVE IT A CLICK

The Postal Service's award-winning website, *usps.com*, has a new look. Customers visiting the homepage will notice less clutter and easier-to-find links to the products and services they use most, including online shipping, package pickup and shipping supplies. In addition to the cleaner design, graphics highlighting the most popular product and service offerings will help customers more easily navigate the site and find the information they need.

"We are committed to making *usps.com* one of the best government websites and one of the best websites in the nation," said Robert Bernstock, president of Shipping and Mailing Services. "These changes help guarantee that our website is relevant, customer-focused and, most important, easy to use."

usps.com features sections for both consumers and businesses — large and small. Consumers can calculate prices, find a ZIP Code, locate a Post Office, track and confirm mail delivery, print shipping labels and request free package pickup. The *usps.com* business section includes information on Post Office locations, creating direct mail, shipping services as well



as supplies and payment options and tools.

"*usps.com* is the ultimate Post Office," Bernstock said. "Almost anything you can do at a Post Office, you can do online at *usps.com*."

usps.com is one of the most frequently visited government sites, averaging more than 386 million visitors each year and close to 1.2 million visitors each day. ■