



POSTAL NEWS

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U.S. Postal Service Offers Convenience and Simplicity Just In Time for the Holidays

Only 100 Shipping Days Until Christmas
Order Free Flat Rate Boxes by Dec. 3, at usps.com/shop

WASHINGTON — A visit from St. Nick is still more than three months away, but with more than 17 billion cards, letters and packages expected to be delivered this holiday season, the U.S. Postal Service wants to make your shipping experience convenient and ensure your holiday gifts get to their destinations swiftly and safely.

"Christmas may seem a long way off but it's never too early to reduce holiday stress," said Laurie Timmons, USPS Consumer Advocate. "While the Postal Service has tons of products and services to help make your holiday mailing and shipping simpler than ever before, the best advice is to start early."

USPS retail locations have plenty of expedited packaging on-hand to meet customer needs during the holiday shipping season. Or, you can avoid going to the post office visit altogether by visiting the Postal Store® at www.usps.com/shop to order free boxes by Dec. 3 for your holiday shipping needs. Plus, Free Package Pickup and delivery status information using the Track & Confirm tool are available at no cost when shipping online.

Click-N-Ship – an online postage service offered by the United States Postal Service – allows you to create pre-paid shipping labels for certain mail classes – including Priority Mail, Express Mail, Express Mail International, Priority Mail International and Global Express Guarantee – using your own PC and printer.

And since more and more people are accessing the Internet from mobile device, we wanted to be sure our customers' experiences on their smart phones are convenient and user-friendly. The USPS mobile app is available on the iPhone®, Android™ and BlackBerry® for users to track and confirm a package, locate a Post Office and look up a Zip Code more quickly and easily.

As you check off your holiday gift list this season, here are some helpful tips to make sure your gifts arrive safely:

- Remove batteries from toys and other electronic devices. Wrap and place them next to the item in the mailing box. Customers should include the new batteries in the manufacturer's packaging.
- Place a card inside the package that contains both the delivery and return addresses. This ensures the safe return of an item that could not be delivered should the mailing label become damaged or fall off.
- Include both "to" and "from" information on packages — and only on one side.
- Always use a return address, which tells the Postal Service where to return mail if it cannot be delivered.
- Select a box that is strong enough to protect the contents.
- Do not reuse mailing boxes as they can weaken in the shipping process.
- Stuff glass and fragile, hollow items, like vases, with newspaper or packing material to avoid damage.
- When mailing framed photographs, take the glass out of the frame and wrap it separately.

"Customers expect timely, reliable and accurate delivery service at reasonable prices," said Timmons. "USPS is committed to offering you simple ways to get in, out and on your way so you can enjoy this special time of the year."

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.



Laurie Timmons, USPS Consumer Advocate

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A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office™ Boxes. The Postal Service™ receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *usps.com*®, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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