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Contact: Michael Woods
(O) 202-268-7236
(C) 202-997-1668
michael.p.woods@usps.gov
usps.com/news
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Postal Service Ready for Busiest Mailing Day

More Than 830 Million Pieces of Mail Expected Today

WASHINGTON — Today marks the Postal Service's busiest mailing day of the year, with more than 830 million pieces of mail entering the system. This represents an increase of more than 40 percent in the average daily volume of 583 million pieces of mail.

"Bring on the rush – we are ready to deliver," said Patrick R. Donahoe, Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Operating Officer. "This isn't just our busiest time of year – it's our best time of year. Americans can count on the Postal Service to deliver their holiday gifts in time for Christmas as we have for the past 234 years."

The Postal Service uses 192,000 vehicles to transport holiday mail, including 142,000 half-ton trucks. To help navigate mail movement around the world, staff at the National Operations Center are on "24-7" duty today and throughout the year.

Holiday shoppers have until Dec. 21 for First-Class Mail and Priority Mail items. For those last-minute shoppers, the Postal Service recommends Dec.23 as the last day to mail Express Mail packages.

One way customers can save time during the holiday shipping rush is by using Automated Postal Centers (APCs). Just as an ATM is a virtual bank, the APC is a virtual, stand-alone Post Office. The APC does everything short of face-to-face transactions — dispensing stamps, weighing packages and calculating postage for Express Mail, Priority Mail, First-Class Mail and Parcel Post items. There are 2,500 APCs in Post Office lobbies across the country.

"APCs make visiting a Post Office easier," Donahoe said. "It's one more way we're trying to save customers time waiting in line and offering another alternative to meet their mailing needs."

Customers can also skip the trip to the Post Office completely and ship online using the Postal Service's website, usps.com. Customers can print shipping labels, pay for postage and order free shipping supplies, including the popular Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes, virtually eliminating the need to weigh.

"Flat Rate Boxes are the ultimate gift box," said Donahoe. "No matter what the gift, if it fits, it ships, for one low rate to any state in the country. We'll even pick up your packages for free."

Customers can request free package pickup online at usps.com. The Postal Service will pick up packages during regular mail delivery the next business day – and, unlike with other shipping companies, there is no fee for this service.

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

Visit the Postal Service's interactive holiday press room at usps.com/news. For holiday mailing reminders and shipping tips, follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/holidayshipping.

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Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/news.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 150 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars. With 36,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, the Postal Service relies on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses. Named the Most Trusted Government Agency five consecutive years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$68 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 28th in the 2009 Fortune 500.