

United States Postal Service®

# INDUSTRYALERT

## Mail Spoken Here

March 4, 2016

Keeping up with all the news affecting the mailing industry can be a bit challenging at times, but we're here to help with that. Here's a recent summary of events:

### ***On the Horizon: Postal Service Exigent Surcharge Pricing to End April 10***

Absent Congressional or court action to extend or make permanent an existing exigent surcharge for mailing products and services – including the Forever stamp -- the Postal Service will be required to reduce certain prices on Sunday, April 10, 2016. This mandatory action will worsen the Postal Service's financial condition by reducing revenue and increasing its net losses by approximately \$2 billion per year.

An order from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) requires the 4.3 percent exigent surcharge to be reversed after the Postal Service has collected surcharges totaling \$4.6 billion. As outlined in a notice filed with the PRC, that amount is expected to be reached by April 10th.

The surcharge removal means these First-Class Mail prices will be adjusted to the following:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Mandated Reduction</u>
• Letters (1 oz.)	\$0.49	\$0.47
• Letters additional ounces	\$0.22	\$0.21
• Letters to all international destinations	\$1.20	\$1.15
• Postcards	\$0.35	\$0.34

Commercial prices will also decrease. A complete listing of the final prices, effective April 10, are available on Postal Explorer at [pe.usps.com](http://pe.usps.com).

Any questions or comments you would like to share related to the Exigent Surcharge Rollback can be sent to [Industryfeedback@usps.gov](mailto:Industryfeedback@usps.gov).

### ***USPS Service Alerts***

USPS Service Alerts provide information to consumers, small businesses and business mailers about postal facility service disruptions due to weather-related and other natural disasters or events. Service alerts are done in near real time.

Residential customers and small businesses can use this website ([Service Alerts](#)) to learn if mail is being delivered, or if their Post Offices are open. Business mailers are provided more detailed information about USPS mail processing facilities, and the operating status of postal delivery units.

## ***Plant-Verified Drop Shipment Update***

With the upcoming price change occurring on April 10, 2016, plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) mailings will be verified and accepted as follows:

**Current Prices** — PVDS mailings verified and paid for before April 10, 2016, using the current prices, will be accepted at destination entry postal facilities through April 24, 2016, when presented using eInduction or eVs processes or with appropriate verification and payment documentation (PS Form 8125 or PS Form 8017).

**New Prices** — PVDS mailings may be verified and paid for beginning March 27, 2016, using the new prices, provided the shipments are not deposited at destination entry postal facilities until April 10, 2016 or later, when presented using eInduction or eVs processes or with appropriate verification and payment documentation (PS Form 8125 or PS Form 8017).

- For mailings with electronic documentation, mailers must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after April 10, 2016.
- For mailings with hard copy postage statements, USPS acceptance employees must enter a Mail Arrival Date that is on or after April 10, 2016.

## ***Product Tracking and Reporting System Outage***

The Product Tracking and Reporting (PTR) system Release 7.0 was postponed. Release 7.0 will be implemented on March 8, 2016 from 7:00 pm CT through 11:00 pm CT. Ingest, staging, reporting, and outbound processing will be suspended during this outage window.

The [USPS.com](http://USPS.com) Tracking site and Call Center interfaces will be available and functioning throughout this window.

## ***Up and Down the Block: USPS Customizes Delivery***

The Postal Service™ Delivery Instructions offering makes it easier for consumers and businesses to fit package deliveries into the day.

That's because instead of receiving the package in person, customers with [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com) accounts can ask their USPS® carriers to leave the package at a different domestic address on the same carrier route for free, or at an address outside the carrier route for the cost of postage.

They can also request that the package be held for pickup at a Post Office™ as well as upgrade their shipments to Priority Mail Express® or Priority Mail®.

Recipients can also ask the Postal Service to leave their packages at a specific location, such as a front or back door, or garage or porch.

To use the tool:

- Enter the relevant USPS Tracking number(s) under the “Quick Tools” section of the site.
- Click on the “Delivery Instructions” tab on the right side of the page and follow the instructions.

## **Two Priority Mail Regional Rate Boxes Are Back Online!**

The Postal Service's Priority Mail® Regional Rate Boxes A and B are now available on Click-N-Ship® after they were inadvertently removed during the January 2016 price change.

Customers who use Click-N-Ship to print their labels will now be charged the rates indicated on page 11 of Notice 123, Price List at [pe.usps.com](http://pe.usps.com). The current rates are:

Boxes	Maximum Weight	Zones							
		L, 1, & 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	15 lbs.	6.01	6.15	6.60	8.15	8.92	9.70	10.77	14.95
B	20 lbs.	6.71	7.90	8.75	10.66	13.37	15.14	17.09	24.41

Additional fees are required, plus the above postage, if paid at Retail: Zones 1–4: \$2.25; Zones 5–9: \$1.00. The IMpb® non-compliance fee of \$0.20 per piece is also applicable.

## **Package Intercept Plays Defense**

The Postal Service's Package Intercept service is the perfect solution for shippers who find themselves suddenly needing to make a change to a shipment's original delivery address. The Business Customer Gateway is the control center from which business customers can make those changes. Mailers should:

- Upload a Package Intercept file and enter a USPS® Tracking number;
- Redirect the shipment to a new domestic address;
- Ask that it be returned to the sender; or
- Request that it be held at one of 32,000 Post Offices™ for pickup.

The Business Customer Gateway is located at [Click here](#). For more information about using Package Intercept, visit: [Click here](#).

## **Getting Expedited Packaging Supplies**

Companies running low on Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail shipping supplies can use [USPS.com](http://USPS.com) to order more — and have those free expedited packaging supplies delivered in no more than five business days.

Both the Package Pickup tool [Click here](#) and the “Shipping Services” tab [Click here](#) allow customers to request up to five Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Flat Rate Envelopes and up to five small, medium or large Priority Mail Flat Rate Boxes, which are fulfilled by the local Post Office and delivered on the same day or on the next business day - or three to five business days when fulfilled by the distribution center.

## **USPS 2016 Promotion and Incentive Programs**

Keep up to date with the latest promotion and incentive programs for First-Class™ and Standard Mail® by visiting [Click here](#) to view webinars, USPS promo calendar, and general information.

## **National Postal Forum – This Month!**

We are putting the final touches on the National Postal Forum being held March 20 – 23rd at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel & Convention Center, Nashville TN. The attendees represent a cross-section of the entire mailing industry and include international participants. Aside from US Postal Service attendees, speakers and exhibitors, the average mailing industry attendee is middle to upper management and is involved in the buying decisions for mailing-related products. These attendees represent a cross-section of companies from the smallest to the largest. For more information, log on to the NPF site at [NPF.org](http://NPF.org). If you are already registered, we look forward to seeing you there!

## **Published Mailing Standards Documents**

### **March 2016:**

\*IMM Revision: Global Direct Entry Wholesaler Program (3/3)

### **February 2016:**

\*DMM Revision: Postage Stamp Denominations (2/18)

\*DMM: Proper Use of Flat Rate Containers (2/18)

\*DMM Clarification: Business Reply Mail (2/18)

\*DMM Revision: Priority Mail Regional Rate Box Pricing (2/18)

\*IMM Revision: Priority Mail International Parcels Indemnity (2/18)

\*DMM Correction: Periodicals Bundle and Container Charges in Combined Mailings (2/4)

\*IMM Revision: Individual Country Listing for Cuba (2/4)

\*FRN: Revisions to the Requirements for Authority to Manufacture and Distribute Postage Evidencing Systems (2/29) **(Comment period ends 3/30/16)**

### **January 2016:**

DMM: Periodicals Bundle and Container Charges in Combined Mailings (PB, 1/7)

IMM Revision: IPA Service to Japan (PB, 1/7)

IMM Revision: Individual Country Listing for Japan (PB, 1/7)

\*Purple means new additions since the last *Mail Spoken Here* was issued on January 29, 2016.

For your reference:

FRN: [Federal Register Notice](#)

PB: [Postal Bulletin](#)

[Postal Explorer](#) is a mailer's resource for all information contained in the [Domestic Mail Manual](#) (DMM), [International Mail Manual](#) (IMM), [Publication 52](#), *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*, mailing standards [Federal Register](#) notices, and the [Postal Bulletin](#). In addition, all pricing files (Excel and CSV format) and postage statements, are available on the Postal Explorer website for mailers to download.

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*Mail Spoken Here is brought to you by the Office of Industry Engagement and Outreach, Consumer and Industry Affairs; bringing you the latest news on mail coming from the Postal Service.*

*It is our intent to provide an ongoing news recap of all mailing requirements, Federal Register notices, Postal Bulletin articles, and webinars. We'll keep you posted on any comment-period requirements, and let you in on upcoming events or changes to standards when the information is available.*

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