



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 2, 2004

Contact: Media Relations
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News Release No. 04-086
www.usps.com

SHOW HIM YOU'VE BEEN GOOD **MAILING SANTA LETTERS**

WASHINGTON, DC – Santa Claus has a lot in common with the United States Postal Service. Santa's customer satisfaction levels directly relate to consistent, on-time delivery. Neither rain nor snow nor heat nor gloom of night keeps Santa and his dedicated helpers from providing joy at millions of homes the world over. While Santa's been doing it a bit longer than the Postal Service, for more than two centuries he's relied almost exclusively on U.S. Postal Service letter carriers to bring him letters from girls and boys all across America.

This holiday season will be no different. The Postal Service is gearing up for a huge mail delivery to the North Pole to help Santa and his elves get ready for the big day.

Getting Mail to Santa – Quickly and Safely

Santa has offered to share these easy tips with children and their families to help their letters get to him as quickly and safely as possible:

- Children should ask their parents for help addressing and putting stamps on their letters. This can help reduce misspellings – which can slow down letters – or using too much or too little postage.
- Like all mail, it's important that letters to Santa include a complete return address with ZIP Code.
- Santa enjoys candy canes and cookies, and his reindeer enjoy fresh hay. But because these treats can be damaged or crushed when sent in a regular envelope, Santa says it's better to leave them out on Christmas Eve than to mail them.
- No extra packaging material, such as string or tape, is needed on a letter to Santa. The glue on the envelope flap does the trick.

Letters addressed to Santa at the North Pole, AK – as well as other holiday mail – can be given directly to letter carriers. They don't have to be placed in collection boxes or taken to the Post Office. And, as always, families with curbside mailboxes can put mail in their mailboxes for pick up.

Helping Santa Help Those in Need

While Santa receives most of these letters addressed to him at the North Pole, AK, some are sent to certified organizations and individuals who help those in need. Many Santa letters will be answered by a variety of Santa's helpers – charitable organizations, employees of local Post Offices and volunteers who want to help make children's holiday wishes come true.

Post Office to Santa

The Postal Service is helping create holiday memories for children. Parents and guardians can work with their children as they write letters to Santa. They can even craft a response from Santa and mail it in a second envelope to the Fairbanks, AK, Post Office. Postal elves at the nearby North Pole Post Office will postmark Santa's replies and mail them back to the children.

Santa's response should then be placed in a stamped envelope addressed to the child, and the North Pole, AK, should be included as the return address. This envelope should then be placed into a larger, properly stamped, First-Class Mail or Priority Mail envelope and mailed to:

**North Pole Christmas Cancellation
Postmaster
5400 Mail Trail
Fairbanks AK 99709-9998**

North Pole postmark requests must arrive in Fairbanks, AK, before December 15, 2004. Please mail your request by Dec. 10.

Customers interested in obtaining the North Pole Postmark on greeting cards should mail them to the address above, making sure that stamped envelopes contain inserts (empty envelopes can be damaged by high-speed sorting equipment).

By following these helpful hints customers can keep letters to and from Santa moving as quickly as possible. To learn more about addressing, premium services and mail safety measures put into place by the Postal Service, visit www.usps.com.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 141 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68.9 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 40,000 retail locations nationwide.