



POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 29, 2005

Contact: Media Relations
202-268-2155
News Release No. 05-103
www.usps.com

POSTAL SERVICE PREPARES FOR BUSIEST MAILING AND DELIVERY DAYS
20 billion letters, packages and cards heading across America through Christmas

Washington, DC – If all the mail the U.S. Postal Service will deliver on Dec. 19 was placed end to end, it would circle the globe. Six times.

The Postal Service will deliver 20 billion letters, packages and cards between Thanksgiving and Christmas, with the busiest mailing day expected to be Monday, Dec. 19, with more than 280 million cards and letters being cancelled – more than twice that of an average day. Total mail volume on Dec. 19 is expected to rise to **900 million pieces** of mail, up from 670 million pieces on an average day.

“We know that our customers depend on us during the holidays. We’ve been delivering holiday cheer for 236 years,” said Patrick Donahoe, Deputy Postmaster General and Chief Operating Officer. “If I could sit down at the kitchen table with every American family this holiday season, I would share just one simple message. We’re ready for you!”

About 100 million First-Class letters are processed every day. That number increases to 150 million a day during the holidays. About 1 million packages will be delivered every day through Christmas Eve. The busiest delivery day will be Wednesday, Dec. 21.

“Our commitment to our customers remains strong. We have a challenge ahead that is going to be met. And we have plans in place to meet them,” Donahoe said.

More than 7,400 Post Offices across the country have extended hours into the evening and weekends for the holiday season. Within the next two weeks, the National Operations Center will be staffed around the clock, seven days a week, to monitor and coordinate mail transportation nationwide.

More than 2,500 Automated Postal Centers (APCs) have been installed in Postal facilities, reaching into more and more neighborhoods around the country to make visiting a Post Office easier. Just as an ATM is a virtual, stand-alone 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.

APCs also provide extensive mailing information and ZIP Code locators.

And, like Santa Claus, the Post Office is everywhere, with 36,000 locations across the country and on every computer in America at **usps.com**. Almost anything that can be done at a Post Office can be done online at usps.com, at a time that is convenient for the customer.

Ship a package, purchase stamps, hold mail, request a carrier pick up, and design and print greeting cards, and find a ZIP Code. Included in the more than two dozen services available through the Postal Service website are Click-N-Ship and Carrier Pickup. Click-N-Ship allows customers to print labels and pay for postage and insurance from laptops or desktops.

With Carrier Pickup, customers can take advantage of the personal convenience and service of having packages picked up at their home or office, saving a trip to the Post Office, regardless of the weather. Unlike other shipping companies, there is no fee for the service.

Customers simply print Priority Mail and Express Mail labels with Click-N-Ship, then log on to www.usps.com to request a pickup of the package. A letter carrier will pick it up at no extra charge during the next day's delivery.

Customers also can call 1-800-ASK-USPS for general information on hours and services. More than 2.2 billion holiday cookie stamps have been printed and are available to customers by calling 1-800-STAMP-24. Stamps also may be purchased at more than 80,000 locations, including supermarkets, convenience stores, drugstores and ATMs, in addition to Post Offices.

"With the holidays just around the corner, everyone can use a little help. Let our convenient online services and Postal locations around town give you more time to spend with family and friends this holiday season," Donahoe said.

Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 142 million homes and businesses every day, six days a week and is the only service provider delivering 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 \$69 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 Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume—some 206 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven and a half million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide. Its website, usps.com, attracts more than 21 million visitors each month.