



# POSTAL NEWS

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## **USPS' PARCEL RETURN SERVICE IS HERE TO STAY**

WASHINGTON – Customers and merchants looking for an easy and economical way to return merchandise through the mail can now rely on Parcel Return Service (PRS) to handle their needs on a permanent basis. By approving a recommendation from the Postal Rate Commission, the U.S. Postal Service Governors on Wednesday made PRS a permanent mailing option. The Board of Governors voted to make the change effective on April 2, 2006.

Launched as a two-year experiment in October 2003, the service offers a cost-effective way for merchants to obtain items their customers choose to return. It provides added convenience to customers through a specially designed, prepaid return label that can be included in the original packages, mailed to customers, or made available for a customer to download via the Internet.

Merchants, or their parcel consolidators, who have been approved as participants for the Parcel Return Service program can choose to pick up returned merchandise at a Post Office delivery unit or Bulk Mail Center. This lowers processing and transportation costs for the Postal Service, which results in lower prices for merchants. Customers need only place the pre-printed, postage-paid label on the package they wish to return, give it to a letter carrier, drop it in a collection box or bring it to a Post Office.

In other action, the Governors approved another recommendation from the Postal Rate Commission, extending the expiration date for the Repositionable Notes (RPNs) provisional service by one year. RPNs are sticky notes that can be placed on envelopes, catalogs, magazines, or newspapers to highlight important information or a special offer. Since the notes can be easily removed from the envelope, the recipient can place them somewhere handy as a reminder of the offer.

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 more than 144 million homes and businesses every day 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 \$70 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 212 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.