

# Greener Than You Think

Everyone — consumers, businesses, nonprofit organizations — uses the mail, and the U.S. Postal Service is committed to managing resources wisely to minimize mail's environmental impact. Across the organization, from supply management to facilities to delivery, the Postal Service is integrating sound environmental business practices into day-to-day operations. Leading by example, USPS is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the future.

- According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the nation's environmental watchdog, advertising mail represents **less than 2.4 percent** of the nearly 254 million tons of municipal solid waste created annually. Nearly 40 percent of advertising mail is recycled.
- The Postal Service is recognized as an environmental innovator and leader, and has been honored with more than **75 major environmental awards**, including 40 White House Closing the Circle Awards for environmental stewardship and 10 WasteWise Partner of the Year awards for best government performance from the EPA.
- USPS is committed to helping consumers make environmentally responsible decisions about their mail, and has a special "green" section on its website with information on products and services, as well as hundreds of helpful facts and suggestions to improve environmental awareness. A key feature of **usps.com/green** is a carbon footprint calculator that consumers can use to see how much they can help the environment by "skipping the trip," and conducting postal business online.
- More than a half-billion packages and envelopes provided to customers by the Postal Service annually are nearly 100 percent recyclable and created using environmentally friendly materials. USPS is the only shipping or mailing company to earn **Cradle to Cradle Certification™** based on the quality of raw materials used to produce Priority Mail and Express Mail packaging, cardboard signs in Post Office lobbies and Ready Post® packaging and shipping supplies — including tape and labels.
  - About 3,000 individual component materials were scientifically evaluated against 39 human and environmental criteria, including renewable energy, water use and recyclability.
  - All suppliers providing USPS boxes, envelopes and other certified materials must also adhere to Cradle to Cradle standards.
- An **Office of Sustainability** coordinates energy, fuel, recycling and sustainability programs across the USPS and among 618,000 employees. Program goals include fleet and facility energy reduction and creating a culture of conservation in every internal business unit and with every external business partner.
- The Postal Service partners with companies, agencies and organizations in ongoing pilot **Mail-Back programs** to safely recycle and properly dispose of e-waste, including small electronics, compact fluorescent lamps and discarded or expired pharmaceuticals. These programs leverage USPS's national infrastructure, create customer convenience, and find new, innovative uses for the mail.
- **"Read, Respond, Recycle"** is the simple, effective message behind Post Office Box Lobby mail recycling programs at almost 6,000 postal facilities across the country. By placing secure recycle bins in Post Office lobbies, the Postal Service is making it even easier for customers to make environmentally friendly choices.
- The Postal Service created and leads the **Greening the Mail Task Force**, a public/private partnership charged with improving the environmental performance of mail. Members include customers, industry groups, suppliers, environmental organizations and the EPA. One of the primary goals is to work with marketers to make sure that mail is addressed and targeted correctly so consumers receive the mail they want.
- The Postal Service is a founding reporting member of the Climate Change Registry, a nonprofit collaboration in North America that sets consistent and transparent standards to calculate, verify and publicly report greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into a single registry. In April 2009, USPS earned a **Climate Action Champion** award from the Registry's sister agency, the California Climate Action Registry, for its efforts to reduce GHG. The Postal Service became a founding reporting company by joining The Climate Registry in November 2007.