

Let's Keep The Mail Safe

Notice 107 – October 2003



UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®

usps.com

Mail Safety Is Our Mutual Responsibility

The United States Postal Service® has a greater responsibility than ever before to preserve the trust of our customers, our employees, and those with whom we do business – and to keep them safe. The Aviation Mail Security and Hazardous Materials programs represent the commitment of the U.S. Postal Service® to providing a safe environment for our customers, employees, and the traveling public.

The danger to life and property in the handling and transportation of hazardous materials is real. It is to our mutual advantage to safeguard ourselves and our property from potential hazards.

What You Can Do to Help

The U.S. Postal Service has taken a proactive role in the areas of aviation mail security and hazardous materials acceptance, handling, and transport for many years. But we also need your help. Each customer must comply with the restrictions outlined in this publication to assist us in securing a safe mailing environment for us all. Mailers must know the physical characteristics of the hazardous materials they wish to mail. Mailers are responsible for ensuring that they do not mail any hazardous material that can injure persons or property unless the hazardous material is permitted under the mailing standards in *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) C023. Further guidance is available from Publication 52, *Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail*. *The International Mail Manual* contains the standards that apply to hazardous materials intended for foreign addresses. Reused packaging and boxes are only acceptable when all markings and labels are removed or completely marked out. Regardless of what is actually inside your package, markings or labels for hazardous materials may result in delivery delays or a package return.

Laws That Keep Us Safe

With certain limited exceptions, the federal law in Title 18 *United States Code 1716* (18 U.S.C. 1716) declares it a crime to mail anything that may kill or injure persons or harm property. Persons violating the statute may be subject to fines, imprisonment, or other severe penalties.

The statute, however, allows the Postal Service to adopt rules prescribing preparation and packaging conditions under which certain hazardous materials, which are not “outwardly of their own force dangerous or injurious to life, health, or property,” may be mailed. Because these rules are very limited, most hazardous materials are prohibited from mailing.

Hazard Classes

For purposes of transportation and shipping, federal regulations assign each hazardous material to one of the following nine hazard classes. The following list provides examples of items that are subject to mailing restrictions or prohibitions.

- **Class 1: Explosives**
Fireworks, ammunition, fuses, model rocket engines
- **Class 2: Gases**
Aerosols, air bag inflators, scuba tanks
- **Class 3: Flammable Liquids**
Gasoline, some paints or inks, varnishes, alcoholic beverages
- **Class 4: Flammable Solids**
Some cosmetics, matches, signal flares
- **Class 5: Oxidizers and Organic Peroxides**
Oxidizing liquids, nitrates, swimming pool chemicals, peroxides
- **Class 6: Poisonous Materials and Infectious Substances**
Arsenic, potassium cyanide, parathion, pesticides, tear gas, irritating materials, items containing etiologic agents, used sharps, used medical equipment
- **Class 7: Radioactive Materials**
Products with a radioactive warning label
- **Class 8: Corrosives**
Chlorine bleach, ammonia, batteries, drain cleaners, acids, mercury
- **Class 9: Miscellaneous Hazardous Materials**
Magnetized materials, dry ice, self-inflating life saving devices

Ask Before You Mail

Please check with local Postal Service officials before attempting to mail any of the items noted in this publication. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that articles you present for mailing comply with all Postal Service regulations.

Improper mailing of hazardous materials may subject you to civil and/or criminal liability.

Rates and Classification Service Centers

Additional information can be obtained from your local Post Office™ and the Rates and Classification Service Centers (RCSCs) noted below.

NEW YORK RCSC
1250 BROADWAY 14TH FL
NEW YORK NY 10095-9599
212-613-8676

CHICAGO RCSC
3900 GABRIELLE LN RM 111
FOX VALLEY IL 60597-9599
630-978-4329

SAN FRANCISCO RCSC
33 NEW MONTGOMERY ST STE 1690
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94105-4514
415-247-7200